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ABSTRACT

Devoted to the Winnipeg General Strike in 1919, this document provides social science teachers with details of the strike as well as general information on teaching about unions, labor, and working-class history. The first article, "The Winnipeg General Strike" (Doug Smith), presents the events during and prior to the Winnipeg General Strike that lasted from May 15 through June 26, 1919. A list provides 16 references for further information on the strike. The second article, "Teaching about Unions: Outlines for Grades 9 and 11" (Ken Osborne), offers a suggested outline for a unit on trade unions at grade 9 as a part of the Canada today course or at grade 11 as part of the Canadian history course. In addition, a bibliography of teaching materials related to the history of work and the workplace follow the unit outline. The third article, "The Role of Public Schools: Manitoba Federation of Labour," discusses the part played by the labor movement in promoting free compulsory education in Canada in the early 20th century and the current crisis in public education. The fourth article, "Teaching about Labour and Industry with Cartoons" (Ken Osborne), uses 14 cartoons dated from approximately 1880 to 1920 to teach a variety of connected topics that essentially center on the growth and impact of capitalism in Canada. The 14 cartoons follow the article. The fifth article, "Women and the Industrial Revolution" (Ken Osborne), examines the role of women during the industrial revolution and contains 12 references. The final article, "An Interview with Fred Tipping" (Bob Davis), relates the story of Tipping, the only teacher on strike during the Winnipeg General Strike. Interspersed in the issue are poems about working men and women. (CK)

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THE MANITOBA SOCIAL SCIENCE TEACHER

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75th Anniversary of the Winnipeg General Strike

VOLUME 20, NO.3 MARCH 1994

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Do I belong to the Knights of Labor?
Why yes my friend I do;
And if you'll be advised by me
You'll join our Order too.

It is not any women's part
We often hear folks say
And it will mar our womanhood
To mingle in the fray.

I fear I will never understand
Or realize it quite
How a woman's frame can suffer
In struggling for the right.

They are only the lower classes
Is a phrase we often meet;
And ladies sneer at working girls
As they pass them in the street.
They stare at us in proud disdain
And their lips in scorn will curl;
As they pass us by we hear them say
She is only a working girl.

Only a working girl! Thank God!
With willing hands and heart,
Able to earn my daily bread
And in life's battle take my part.
You could offer me no title
That I'd be more proud to own
And I stand as high in the sight of God
As the queen upon her throne. ...

Oh workingmen and women,
Who toil for daily bread,
Cheer up, don't be discouraged,
There's better times ahead.
Be faithful to our Order,
Obey and keep its laws,
And never fail when you've a chance
To advocate our cause.
And so we'll stand together
United heart and hand
And make our cause victorious
All over every land.

"A Belleville Sister," 1886. In G.S. Kealey, *Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism* (Toronto, 1980), pp. 189-190.

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The Manitoba Social Science Teacher

Volume 20, Number 3 **March 1994**

The Winnipeg General Strike 3
Doug Smith

Teaching about unions: Outlines for grades 9 and 11 9
Ken Osborne

The role of public schools: Manitoba Federation of Labour 15

Teaching about labour and industry with cartoons 18
Ken Osborne

Women and the Industrial Revolution 44
Ken Osborne

An interview with Fred Tipping 48
Bob Davis

Editorial 2

The Winnipeg General Strike

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Editorial

The Winnipeg General Strike

As readers will realize from our cover, with its reproduction of the sign that caused so much trouble in 1919, this issue of the Journal is devoted to the Winnipeg General Strike. May, 1994, will mark the 75th anniversary of the Strike, which officially began at 11.00 in the morning of 15 May, 1919, and officially ended at the same hour on 26 June. Whatever one thinks of the Strike, there can be no doubt that it was an important event in Canadian history, and certainly in the history of Winnipeg. As historians have shown, it marked municipal politics for decades to come, and perhaps in some ways, continues to do so. Beyond Winnipeg, the Strike was a crucial event in the history of Canadian labour and in the shaping of the relations between labour and capital and labour and the state. In some ways, the Strike represents a road not taken, for its defeat spelled a major setback for what promised to be an emerging radical alternative to conventional economics and politics.

The Strike Leaders at Stony Mountain penitentiary. Back row: J.S. Woodsworth, George Armstrong, Fred Dixon, Bob Russell, R.E. Bray and A.A. Heaps. In front, William Ivens and John Queen. (Provincial Archives of Manitoba)

Over the years, the Strike has been in some ways domesticated, as memories faded and mellowed, and as 'class' came to be treated in many quarters as a nasty and even un-Canadian word. R.B.Russell, for example, saw his status gradually change from that of probably the most hated and feared man in Winnipeg to that of genial labour elder statesman, with a school named after him. Even our history textbooks came to recognize that the Strike took place and devoted a paragraph or two to it, though usually in fairly bland terms that also delivered a moral message about the importance of cooperation and non-violence. As one 1978 text put it, "The Winnipeg General Strike was a bitter experience for both workers and owners. However, both sides learned a lesson. From this time on, labourers and owners were more tolerant of each other." Subsequent history casts considerable doubt on the accuracy of this optimistic judgment, but it is fairly typical of the determination of textbooks to emphasize the positive, or what they see as the positive.

In the 1980's textbooks began to treat the history of the Strike more fully and fairly and most modern texts deal reasonably adequately with it. This, in part, reflects the increased amount of research that has been done on the Strike in recent years. Thanks to the efforts of labour and working-class historians, there is now plenty of material to draw on if one wishes to teach about the Strike. It also reflects the more general turn to social history which is evident at all levels of history teaching. And more fundamentally, it reflects the continuing efforts by unions and other working-class groups to maintain their vision of Canada's past, present and future, a vision which differs considerably from that which currently seems to dominate orthodox economic and political thinking.

This issue of the Journal is intended to mark the 75th anniversary of the Strike. However, it is not confined to the details of the Strike itself, but instead deals also with some wider issues of teaching about unions, labour and working-class history generally.

The Winnipeg General Strike

Doug Smith

On the morning of May 15, 1919, the women who operated the telephone switchboards for the Manitoba Government Telephone system began Canada's most dramatic general strike. When the night shift operators walked off the job that morning, there were no day shift workers to replace them. The Winnipeg General Strike, which was to shut the city down for six weeks, was on.

By that afternoon, metal shops, garment factories, building sites, retail shops, and hundreds more establishments throughout the city were abandoned. The street cars, which were privately-owned in those days, returned to their barns. A few civic workers stayed on the job to keep the city supplied with water - but they provided only enough water pressure to supply water to the first floor of any building.

Despite the fears of strike opponents that this was a revolution, everything took place under the watchful eyes of the Winnipeg police. Even though the police had voted to support the Strike, the strike leaders had asked them to stay on the job in order to maintain law and order and prevent strike opponents finding an excuse to intervene with force.

It is impossible to get an exact picture of the number of people who took part in the Strike. Ninety-four of the city's 96 unions supported the Strike, and most estimates suggest that up to 35,000 people, out of a total workforce of 60,000 joined the Strike. Interestingly, this meant that at least half of the people who took part in the Strike did not belong to a union.

Though it was remarkably free of violence, or indeed of public disturbance of any sort, the Strike was brought to a quick end by combined police and military action; the Strike leaders were arrested and their supporters assaulted in the streets.

Winnipeg employers who worked with the federal government to help crush the Strike saw it not as an ordinary Strike but as a revolution, but, while many Strike leaders subscribed to a variety of radical beliefs, they were trying not to overthrow established authority, but to win collective bargaining rights. In itself, this was no modest demand for Canadian workers did not begin to achieve this right for another 15 years.

Rich and Poor in Winnipeg

The Canadian Pacific Railway brought the industrial revolution to Winnipeg and with it came the politics of corruption and manipulation. In order to get the railway to run through Winnipeg, the city's leaders bought off the CPR with free bridges, prime real estate and a permanent tax holiday.

As a result, Winnipeg grew up as a city with a railway spike driven right through its heart. The CPR put the continent's largest marshalling yards right in the middle of the city's centre. There was literally a right and wrong side of the tracks in Winnipeg. To the north of the CPR was the crowded housing that was built to house the city's growing working class. Meanwhile, the Winnipeg establishment, in an endless search for respectability, kept moving south, eventually settling in the newly constructed mansions of Wellington Crescent.

Winnipeg society was dominated by a group of adventurous, individualistic entrepreneurs, filled with great dreams for the city. They often got their start as merchants, but they soon branched out into manufacturing. By 1906, there were 148 factories in Winnipeg, employing 12,000 men and women. From the outset, working conditions were an issue. Laura Goodman Salverson wrote this account of the saddlery where her father worked. "It was an abandoned skating rink, long, low, and gloomy, with small-paned windows that admitted inadequate light and no ventilation. In summer, the rain leaked down through the rotting roof, and in winter the frost coated the walls." It was very different from the picture John Marlyn painted of River Heights where "the houses were like palaces, great and stately, surrounded by their own private parks and gardens."

The Trade Union Background

The railway not only brought industrialism to Winnipeg, it also introduced trade unionism to the city. There were different unions for the engineers, firemen, and conductors, and, in addition, the railways were huge industrial establishments, employing hundreds of skilled workers, including machinists, boilermakers, and blacksmiths, as well as an army of unskilled labourers who did general labouring jobs, both inside the works and outside, on the track.

There were also other unions throughout Winnipeg representing a variety of skilled trades. Their strength lay in their skills rather than in their numbers, since they would usually account for only a small number of workers in each workplace.

Their kind of unionism was under challenge. Perhaps the most prominent exponent of organizing all workers, rather than just skilled workers, was a Scottish-born CPR machinist named Robert Boyd Russell, who arrived in Winnipeg in 1911 to work for the CPR. When he joined the machinists' union he refused to repeat the part of the membership oath which restricted union membership to white workers. And in articles in the machinists' newspaper, he argued against organizing workers on the basis of skill. In his words: "as mechanical production advances, one craft after another is tumbled into the abyss of common labour. This fact is constantly teaching even the most effectively organized Labour classes that in the long run their position ... will depend upon the amalgamation of all the workers into one army."

When the unions faced the self-made men who ran Winnipeg industry, the results could be explosive. At the turn of the century, the railyards were the scene of a number of bitter strikes. In 1906, streetcar workers went out on strike after their union leaders were fired. Out of town strikebreakers were imported and the militia was called out to prevent picketing. That same year, the Winnipeg metal shops broke a machinists' strike by getting a court-ordered injunction against picketing. The courts were so sympathetic to employers that, in labour circles, Winnipeg earned the name of "injunction city." The owner of the Vulcan Iron Works, E.G. Barrett, gave voice to the thoughts of many of Winnipeg's business class when he said, "This is a free country and ... as far as we are concerned the day will never come when we will have to take orders from any union."

The labour movement's fortunes improved considerably during the First World War. The war ended a recession and brought about full employment, with the result that union membership rapidly increased. At the same time, employers put increasing pressure on their workers to speed up, to increase output.

During the war years, Winnipeg unions experimented with new forms of organization. The rail shop craft workers for example, negotiated jointly with a government railway board during the war. While Winnipeg rail workers were not happy with the agreement that was reached, the joint bargaining seemed to be a step towards the type of inclusive unionism advocated by unionists like R.B. Russell.

In 1918, Winnipeg experienced its first general strike. The city and its municipal workers could not agree on a pay increase. The city electricians went on strike and so caused a major crisis. The city council took a hard line, rejecting any compromise, and stripped civic workers of the right to strike. Soon most of the City's craft unionists joined the strike, and the Winnipeg Labour Council was organizing a city-wide sympathy strike, since union rights were now at risk. At the height of the strike, 15,000 workers from 35 unions were off the job. The strike ended when the federal government intervened with a deal that met with union approval. Twice more during 1918 the Winnipeg labour leadership considered holding general strikes, and R.B. Russell blamed the failure of other unions to support the metal workers for the defeat of their strike.

Radicals and Socialists

The war also deepened an existing division in the Canadian labour movement. By the end of the 19th century, sections of the Canadian labour movement had adopted a political philosophy opposed to both the Liberal and Conservative Parties, proposing instead a reform platform that sought to make Canada a much more democratic society. To achieve these goals, some unionists formed Independent Labour Parties, while others sought refuge in the left-wing of the Liberal Party.

The 20th century saw the appearance of a more radical analysis of Canadian society, one which advocated a restructuring of society along socialist lines. Small socialist and social democratic parties grew up in Canada's industrial centres. In Winnipeg, they recruited such prominent unionists as Dick Johns and R.B. Russell, who in any case brought socialist ideas with them from their British backgrounds.

At meetings of the Trades and Labour Congress, the national body that represented Canada's unions, Western delegates often found themselves to be at odds with the national leadership. Socialists like Russell opposed involvement in the First World War, because they felt it was a war being fought by a group of rival imperialist powers. They argued that there was no reason for Canadian workers to go overseas and kill German workers in the name of the British Empire. The westerners felt that the national labour leadership should do more to oppose conscription, and they were unhappy over the lukewarm response to their

proposals for organizing workers on the basis of industry rather than craft.

After seeing their proposals repeatedly rebuffed, Western Canadian trade unionists decided to hold their own labour convention in Calgary in the spring of 1919. Initially intended as a reform caucus meeting, the meeting turned into a secession movement. Motions were passed calling for a referendum on the creation of One Big Union, aimed at uniting all workers, skilled and unskilled, regardless of specific trade. The delegates also voted to hold a general strike to demand the 30-hour week as a way to battle unemployment.

The OBU was not created at Calgary, but the foundation for a new radical, industrial union movement was laid. And When the Calgary delegates came out in support of the Russian revolution, Western Canadian employers came to view the Calgary conference with deep suspicion.

The General Strike

By May 1919, Winnipeg workers had endured four years of war. They had seen their wages fail to keep pace with rapid inflation, at the same time that there were widespread reports of wartime profiteering by employers. They had experimented with the general strike in 1918 and found it to be an effective weapon in forcing employers to negotiate. They feared a post-war recession and widespread unemployment as troops returned from overseas. Some of them were attracted to socialist alternatives to capitalism. In this atmosphere, Winnipeg metal shop and building trade workers approached their employers.

They had created a Building Trades Council and Metal Trades Council, made up of all the unions in each sector. They sought to negotiate with their employers as a group, rather than on an individual basis. For their part, the owners of Winnipeg's metal shops said they were willing to deal only with individual plant committees - and they wanted to pick half of the committee members. The building employers held some talks with the Building Trades Council, but then announced they would not deal with it. As a result, in early May, the Councils called strikes in the metal and the building trades. At this point, the Winnipeg Labour Council decided to hold a referendum on whether or not to hold a general strike to support them. The vote was 8,667 to 645 in favour, with the general strike planned to begin on May 15, 1919.

In early 1919, a group of veterans had broken up a socialist meeting and destroyed the offices of the Socialist Party of Canada. But on May 15, a mass meeting of veterans was held and a pro-strike resolution put forward by Richard Rigg - a veteran who had held senior positions in the Labour Council - won large-scale support. In addition, pro-strike veterans staged a number of impressive parades to demonstrate their support for the strikers' demands for compulsory collective bargaining.

On 16 May, a very different meeting was held. The leading members of Winnipeg's economic elite met to form the Citizens' Committee of One Thousand. General H.D. Ketchen urged the recruiting of "loyal minded citizens" into the militia, since they might be needed to defend "law and order in the City." The Committee decided to try and restore services that were interrupted by the strike. As the strike progressed the leading Committee member, A.J. Andrews, a prominent Winnipeg lawyer, worked with the federal government to defeat the strike. In many ways the Citizens' Committee operated as an unelected civic government, an ironic turn of events since this was the very accusation it levelled against the General Strike leaders.

The Committee portrayed the Strike as the creation of the "enemy alien" - one advertisement said Winnipeggers had to choose between a grimacing, bomb throwing terrorist and the Red Ensign. And, despite their professed concern for law and order, the Committee demanded the dismissal of the police force, because the police union had supported the strike. Moreover, when Winnipeg Mayor Charles Gray tried to get talks going between the metal shop owners and the unions, the Citizens' Committee succeeded in dissuading the metal shop owners from participating.

Permitted by Authority of the Strike Committee

The strikers organized a General Strike Committee of approximately 300 people and from this group drew a 15-person executive. One of the first issues they had to deal with was the supply of bread and milk. They asked dairy workers to remain on the job, but the dairies were afraid that strike supporters might think their delivery wagon-drivers were strike-breakers. To prevent this, the dairies were given signs which read, "Permitted by Authority of the Strike Committee." Even though these signs were requested by dairy owners at a meeting that Citizens' Committee members attended, the Citizens later claimed they proved the strike was in reality a revolution in the making.

Allowing the delivery of milk and bread was the closest the strikers came to a revolution. Instead of attempting to overthrow the city government, the strike leaders urged people to stay home. The strikers' newspaper urged: "No matter how great the provocation, do not quarrel. Do not say an angry word. Walk away from the fellow who tries to draw you."

Strike supporters turned out in thousands for open air meetings in Victoria Park just off Main Street in downtown Winnipeg. There they were addressed by people such as

Fred Dixon, a labour member of the provincial legislature. In one speech, Dixon reminded his audience, "Jesus was a carpenter's son, not a lawyer, financier, or iron master - it was easy to guess which side he would be on in this struggle."

Women worked with the Women's Labour League to establish a kitchen at a Main Street hotel where free meals were provided for striking women - men who could afford it, were expected to pay; those who couldn't were allowed to eat free. Over 1,200 meals were served daily. WLL leader Helen Armstrong played a very active role in the strike and helped persuade many women who worked in retail stores to join the strike.

Bloody Saturday, 21 June 1919.

The federal government interpreted the strike as an apprehended insurrection. The federal Attorney General, Arthur Meighen, himself a Manitoban, argued that any general strike was by definition revolutionary, since it would lead to a collapse of legally constituted authority, with the result that the strikers would have to assume the functions of government. The government began recruiting additional militia forces, and reinforced the military and Mounted Police presence in Winnipeg. At the same time, all levels of government provided a lead to private sector employers by ordering civic, provincial and federal workers to return to work or lose their jobs. Very few workers submitted to this ultimatum - and the government began recruiting new postal workers, telephone operators and civic employees.

When the police were told to swear an oath disavowing their support for the Strike and promising not to join an "outside union", they refused. As a result, they were dismissed, and with the help of the Citizens' Committee, 2,000 "special" constables were recruited. On their first day on the job, these untrained and overzealous worthies provoked a near riot.

The federal government also rushed legislation through parliament that allowed for the deportation of anyone seeking to overthrow constituted authority, even if they were British-born.

The strikers gained some encouragement from the fact that right across Canada working people responded with their own sympathy strikes. From Vancouver, British Columbia, to Amherst, Nova Scotia, workers downed tools in support of the Winnipeg General Strike.

The government feared the Strike could bring the national rail system to a halt and so paralyze the country. They decided to crush the strike before that could happen. Federal labour minister Gideon Robertson, himself a traditional craft unionist, who opposed the radicalism of people like Russell and his colleagues, met with the metal shop owners and persuaded them to offer a proposal that would be rejected by the unions, but would create the impression that it was the unions that were intransigent. This proposal was released to the newspapers before it was given to the Strike leaders, but before they could formally respond to it they were in jail.

Early on the morning of June 17, Mounted Police swept through working class Winnipeg, raiding union offices and scooping up Strike leaders. Bob Russell, William Ivens, George Armstrong and A.A. Heaps and others were taken to Stony Mountain Penitentiary, where they faced charges of seditious conspiracy. They were released on bail only after promising not to take any further role in the Strike.

The veterans decided to organize a protest on Saturday, June 21, although this would violate a ban on parades the mayor had previously issued. Despite this, the veterans decided to go ahead, and showed up with thousands of supporters, early on the afternoon of June 21.

Before the parade could start, some of the strikers attacked a street car, operated by strikebreakers, tipping it over and setting it on fire. The mayor read the Riot Act and called for reinforcements from the military and the police. The Mounted Police arrived first, making two charges through the crowd, before turning, drawing their pistols, and riding through for one last time. In the ensuing disturbance two men died from gunshot wounds.

The specials, armed with clubs, then descended on the demonstrators in order to clear them from the streets. By the end of the afternoon, soldiers with machine guns patrolled the main streets. There was another round of arrests and on June 25 the remaining members of the Strike Committee announced that the Strike would end the following day.

Conclusion

In the following weeks thousands of Winnipeg unionists found themselves dismissed from their jobs and banned from new ones. Winnipeg workers voted overwhelmingly to join the newly formed One Big Union, but a coalition of government, employer, and craft union opposition frustrated them in their efforts to build an industrial union movement.

A few strikers were deported, and others, including R.B. Russell, received prison sentences. But the Strike leaders never lost the support of the workers. In 1919 labour came close to capturing control of Winnipeg city council, with the result that the provincial government instituted a gerrymander to make sure that labour could not gain power at the ballot box. In the 1920 provincial election several Strike leaders were elected, even though they were in prison during the campaign. And in 1921 J.S. Woodsworth, who edited the strike paper during its dying days, was elected to the House of Commons where he served as leader

of the labour group, which in its early years consisted of only two M.P.s.

Another depression and another war were to come and go before Canadian governments would force employers to negotiate with their workers. The dreams of equality and unity that inspired the Winnipeg workers to stand fast for six weeks in the spring of 1919 remain largely unrealized today. In the last two decades, many of the gains labour made in the years following Second World War have been under attack. If the labour movement hopes to reverse this trend and realize those dreams, there are lessons it can draw from the Winnipeg General Strike, not lessons of strategy or tactics, but of the importance of the two abiding strengths of the labour movement: sacrifice and solidarity.

Doug Smith is a Winnipeg writer, reporter and journalist. Among his books are ***Let Us Rise: An Illustrated History of Manitoba Labour*** *(1975) and* ***Joe Zuken, Citizen and Socialist*** *(1990). He is currently teaching in the Labour Studies program at the University of Manitoba.*

Further reading

For many years after 1919, textbooks largely ignored the Winnipeg General Strike. Immediately after the Strike, as part of a campaign to raise funds for the legal defence of the arrested Strike leaders, a committee of strikers compiled their own history of the Strike. It was republished in 1973 under the editorship of Norman Penner as *Winnipeg, 1919: The Strikers' Own History of the Winnipeg General Strike* (Toronto: Lewis and Samuel). The first systematic history of the Strike to be written by a professional historian appeared in 1950 when D.C. Masters wrote *The Winnipeg General Strike*. It was republished by the University of Toronto Press in 1973 and remains easily available. Another useful survey was published in 1974: K. McNaught and D.J. Bercuson, *The Winnipeg Strike: 1919* (Toronto: Longman). McNaught is also the author of a biography of J.S. Woodsworth, *A Prophet in Politics* (University of Toronto Press, 1959). It has a chapter on the Strike and says something about the conditions in Winnipeg. Perhaps the best book for this is D.J. Bercuson, *Confrontation at Winnipeg: Labour, Industrial Relations and the General Strike* [Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1974], which places the Strike in the broader context of labour relations in Winnipeg. Bercuson is also the author of a study of the One Big Union movement: *Fools and Wise Men: The Rise and Fall of the One Big Union* [Toronto: McGraw-Hill-Ryerson, 1978]. Further background on Winnipeg before 1919 can be found in A.F.J. Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth 1874-1914*. [Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975], and also in his *Winnipeg: An Illustrated History* (National Museum of Canada, 1977).

The radicalism of the Strike leaders is discussed in A.R. McCormack, *Reformers, Rebels and Revolutionaries: The Western Canadian Radical Movement 1899-1919* (University of Toronto Press, 1977). A valuable collection of articles putting the Strike in the full context of 1919, not only in Canada but internationally, and giving some of the flavour of more recent writing on the Strike by historians of the working class, appeared in a special issue of *Labour/Le Travail*, 13, Spring 1984.

Especially useful for classroom use are K.W. Osborne, *R.B. Russell and The Labour Movement* (Toronto: Book Society of Canada, 1979) and A. Balawyder, *The Winnipeg General Strike* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1967), which is an easily understandable collection of documents. Also very useful is J.E. Rea's collection of newspaper accounts and interpretations of the Strike in the *Canadian History Through the Press* series. Doug Smith's illustrated history of the Manitoba labour movement is easily available in most libraries. Its title is *Let Us Rise* (Vancouver: New Star, 1985). A good short account of the Strike is also to be found in the *Horizon Canada* magazine series: J. Fringle, "Labour's Year", in Volume 8, pp. 2113-2119. There are good sets of slides in the *Canada's Visual History* series, both on the early history of Winnipeg and on the Strike itself.

Labour/Le Travail

Labour/Le Travail is the journal of the Committee on Canadian Labour History. It is published twice yearly and is dedicated to the broad, interdisciplinary study of Canadian working class and labour history. It is highly recommended for high school libraries. Subscriptions cost $20 annually (individual) or $25 annually (institutional). Contact the Committee on Canadian Labour History, History Department, Memorial University, St. John's, Nfd., A1C 5S7.

By Permission of the Strike Committee...

Open by permission of the Strike Committee
Oh, what an outrage that an entire city
Bread and milk and water and entertainment get
Only by permission of the Soviet!
Labour run by Rabid Reds, getting very cheeky;
Too many aliens talking Bolsheviki.
Let Law and Order be maintained! Uphold the Constitution!
Send a call for volunteers to stop the Revolution!
Such are the ravings of the scab-sheet "Citizen",
Conveniently forgetting that for most of the men
Food and clothes and shelter to them and theirs come through
Only by permission of the owning few.
Bread by permission of the likes of Ed Parnell,
Bacon by permission of Sir Joe Flavelle,
Coal by permission of Nanton the August,
Milk by permission of the Creamery Trust,
Shelter by permission of the Lumber Rings,
Clothing by permission of the Cotton Kings,
Land by permission of the C.P.R. and Peers,
Life by permission of the Profiteers.

*This poem appeared in the **Western Labor News**, the Strike newspaper, during the course of the Strike.*

Teaching About Unions: Outlines for Grades 9 and 11

Ken Osborne

There are three parts to this article: (1) a suggested outline for a unit on trade unions at the Grade 9 level, as part of the Canada Today course; (2) another such outline for use at the Grade 11 level, as part of the Canadian history course; and (3) a bibliography of teaching resources. Both outlines give only headings, subheadings, and related information, but the appropriate information is easy to locate and will, in any case, be familiar to teachers. Obviously, they are intended as suggestions only, and any teachers who find them useful will probably want to adapt them to the circumstances of their particular course. The chief difference between the two outlines is that the Grade 9 puts more emphasis on current events and issues, while the Grade 11 is more historical in nature. Both outlines are necessarily rather schematic in nature and they are not intended to imply that in any way teaching must follow the order laid down here. They are an attempt to outline the content that needs to be dealt with, not the way in which it should be done.

Work, The Workplace and Unions: A Grade 9 Outline

Goals and Objectives

The general goal of this unit is for students to acquire a basic working knowledge of the nature and roles of trade unions in modern Canada and to gain at least a basic understanding of the issues confronting and surrounding unions, while, at the same time, developing the main academic skills of reading, writing, arguing, researching and thinking. In terms of more specific objectives, this means the following:

Knowledge of terms, facts and specifics

Students should be able to define or describe the following:

- Trade union; local; CLC; MFL; CNTU; AFL-CIO.
- Collective bargaining; collective agreement; contract.
- Grievance; conciliation; arbitration.
- Strike; lock-out; picket, injunction; "scab", strike-breaker; back to work legislation.
- Closed [or union] shop; "right to work".
- Rand Formula.

Knowledge of Questions, Issues and General Concerns

Students should be able to understand the following [Note in this context this means: 1. to know the main elements of the issue; 2. to understand the arguments surrounding it; and, 3. to be able to present a defensible personal opinion concerning it]:

- Goals of unions [economic, political, social].
- Role and influence of unions in Canadian society.
- Arguments around the right to strike and the place of strikes.
- Workplace health and safety.
- Gender equity in work and the workplace.
- Impact of technology on work and jobs.
- Unemployment and related questions [e.g. the debate re.changes to unemployment insurance].
- The influence of work in people's lives.

Skills of Research, Analysis, Interpretation and Presentation

Students should be involved in [and where necessary taught the necessary skills]:

- Analysis of newspaper articles, or radio and TV equivalents.
- Analysis of cartoons.
- Analysis of viewpoint pieces in magazines, pamphlets, films and other sources.
- Appropriate individual or group research projects.
- Preparation and presentation of personal viewpoints [essays, reports, videos, etc.].

Social Participation

Students should be involved in some aspect of any of the following:

- Arranging for visiting speakers.
- Interviewing experts in the community [e.g. workers, unionists, employers].
- Taking part in public debate [e.g. letters to politicians or newspapers; preparing briefs].
- Organizing a class or school mini-conference.
- Observing a labour dispute in process.
- Arranging field trips to workplaces, union offices, etc.

Content Outline of the Topic

1. **Work and the Workplace**
   - The influence of work in people's lives [economic, social, psychological, etc.].
   - Theories about meaningful and meaningless work.
   - Control of the workplace - management control; workers' control; the role of unions; worker participation in management; "quality of working life" experiments.
   - Occupational health and safety.
   - Women, gender equity and the workplace.
   - Technology and work: automation, robots, computers, etc.
   - Unemployment: statistics; impact; unemployment insurance; job-training.
2. **The Overall Economic Context**
   - The nature of a mixed economy.
   - Main elements of capitalism: private property, competition, profit.
   - The place of unions.
3. **What is a Trade Union?**
   - A very brief, introductory history.
   - Goals of unions: wages and working conditions; enforcing contracts; social and political goals.
   - Structure of unions: MFL; CLC; union dues and the check-off.
   - Organizing a union.
   - How a union works.
4. **Trade Union Membership**
   - Extent of membership; types of jobs unionized; leading unions.
   - Reasons why workers join, or do not join, unions.
   - The compulsory check-off [the Rand formula].
   - The concept of the "union shop."
5. **Collective Bargaining**
   - Collective Bargaining and Contracts: how do they work?
   - The grievance process.
   - Conciliation and arbitration.
   - Strikes and lock-outs: the right to strike; legal and illegal strikes; the question of essential services; strike organization; picketing; injunctions; back to work legislation.
   - Alternatives to strikes: binding arbitration; final offer selection.
6. **The Role of Government**
   - Duties of the Department of Labour [provincial and federal].
   - Labour legislation: minimum wage laws; union recognition; occupational health and safety; workers' compensation.
   - Social legislation: education and training; unemployment insurance; pensions.
   - Economic policies: free trade and tariffs; job creation; inflation and deficit; etc.
7. **Today's Issues**
   - Women in the workplace: what kinds of jobs; sexual harassment; gender equity; etc.
   - The impact of technology.
   - Part-time versus full-time work.
   - The arguments about NAFTA.
   - Government economic policies: Job creation, inflation and the deficit.
   - The status of collective agreements [e.g. roll-backs; days without pay, etc.]

The History of Canadian Labour: A Grade 11 Outline

Goals and Objectives

As a result of studying this unit, students should have a basic knowledge of the history of unions in Canada, and of working people more generally, as well as a general understanding of the place of unions in contemporary Canadian society. In addition, students should continue to exercise the usual academic skills of research, argument, and thinking. More specifically, this involves the following:

Knowledge of Specific Events

- Trades Union Act 1872; National Policy 1879; Department of Labour 1900; Trades and Labour Congress; Kitchener Conference 1902; Industrial Disputes Investigation Act 1907; Winnipeg General Strike 1919; Regina Manifesto 1933; On-to-Ottawa Trek 1935; Oshawa Strike 1937; PC 1003 1943; Rand Formula 1946; creation of CLC 1956; creation of Canadian Autoworkers 1984.

Knowledge of Specific Names

- Daniel O'Donohue; Mackenzie King; F.W.Taylor; R.B.Russell; J.B.Maclachlan; Tim Buck; R.B.Bennett; J.S.Woodsworth; T.C.Douglas; Bob White.

Knowledge of Specific Terms

- TLC; Knights of Labour; syndicalism; socialism; capitalism; communism; Industrial Workers of the World; One Big Union; craft union; industrial union; general strike; social gospel; scientific management; CCF; CLC; CNTU; collective bargaining.

Understanding of More General Developments and Broader Issues

- The place of socialism and communism in Canadian labour history.
- The role of unions in Canadian society.
- The impact of industrial capitalism on Canada.
- The struggle over control of the workplace.
- Women and work: in the home and in the workplace.
- The arguments for and against unions, past and present.

Skills of Research, Analysis, Thinking, and Presentation

- Using sources beyond the textbook.
- Analyzing viewpoint pieces [cartoons, editorials, partisan arguments, etc.]
- Preparing research reports [individual or group].
- Presenting personal viewpoints.

Social Participation

- Doing interviews and other oral history projects.
- Organizing field trips and/or guest speakers.
- Participating in relevant current issues [e.g. preparing briefs and letters, visiting labour disputes, etc.].
- Organizing a mini-conference, festival or some other event.

Outline of Content

1. **Canada's Industrial Revolution: 1880-1920 [approximately]**
   - Industrial Development: the emergence of capitalism; the chief industries; working conditions; employers' attitudes; the mechanization of the workplace; conflict between owners and workers.
   - The struggle for control of the workplace: the position of skilled workers; the impact of mechanization; F.W.Taylor and "scientific management"; conflict between employers and workers.
   - The growth of unions: the 1872 Trades Union Act; the Knights of Labour; creation of TLC; craft and industrial unionism; growing worker radicalism.
   - The impact of urbanization: growth of cities; living conditions; wealth and poverty.
   - Immigration: the need for labour; government immigration policy; immigrants' problems; unions and immigration
   - Social impacts: mass production; the mass circulationnewspaper and magazine; the department store; transportation [streetcars, automobiles, etc.]; electricity; etc., etc.
   - Social problems: wealth and poverty; urban conditions; condition of children; the position of women; labour unrest.
   - Alternative solutions: the market solution of capitalism; the socialist solution; the cooperative movement; the social gospel; the feminist solution.
   - A new role for government: government becomes more interventionist in social areas: labour legislation [e.g. the first factory acts]; Department of Labour 1900; IDI Act 1907; social legislation [water, public health, schooling, etc.]
2. **The Impact of the First World War**
   - The war-time boost to Canadian industry.
   - Women's position: in war industry; the vote.
   - The controversy over war-time profiteering.
   - Conscription 1917 and labour's opposition.
   - Government control over "radical" activity.
   - Increasing labour militancy.
3. **1919 Year of Strikes**
   - Post-war labour militancy.
   - The Winnipeg General Strike.
   - Other strikes: Amherst, Toronto, etc.
   - Government action.

4. Labour in the 1920's and 1930's

- The not-so-roaring Twenties.
- Trouble in the Nova Scotia coal industry.
- Labour in politics: Woodsworth and Irvine at Ottawa; CCF 1933.
- The Dirty Thirties.
- The Workers' Unity League.
- The issue of Communism.
- Strikes and demonstrations [Estevan; Stratford; Flin Flon; Regina; Oshawa].
- Industrial unionism and the CIO.

5. Labour since 1939

- World War II and industrial growth.
- PC 1003 in 1943 and the enforcement of collective bargaining.
- The Rand Formula 1946.
- The Asbestos Strike of 1949 and labour developments in Quebec.
- 1946-50: the Cold War and the crack-down on Communists.
- Creation of Canadian Labour Congress 1956.
- Creation of NDP, 1961, and labour affiliation with NDP.

Labour in Canada Today

- The growth of "white-collar" unionism.
- National and International unions: creation of the Canadian Autoworkers 1984.
- The issue of unemployment.
- Gender equity in the workplace.
- The changing nature of work.
- The role and place of unions today.

Resources for teaching

What follow are some comments on teaching materials that I have found useful in dealing with the history of work and the workplace. Unless otherwise stated, all of them are best suited to high school students [Grade 9 and up]. Though I will not list them all here in detail, teachers will find especially helpful two sets of visual sources: (1) the many resources produced by the National Film Board, which are easily available to schools; and (2) the slide sets in the series *Canada's Visual History*, produced jointly by the National Museum of Civilization and the National Film Board, and available in many resource centres across the country. The most directly relevant are the following [arranged in rough chronological sequence]: #39 *Pre-industrial Montreal, 1760-c.1850* (P.A.Linteau & J.C.Robert); #49 *St. John: The City and its Poor* (T.W.Acheson); #4 *Lumbering in the Ottawa Valley* (T. Brennan); #1 *Winnipeg: The Growth of a City 1874-1914 (A.F.J.Artibise); #75 The Transformation of Work in the Maritimes 1867-1925* (D.A.Muise); #69 *Early Working Class Life on the Prairies* (J. Cherwinski); #55 *Coal Mining in Nova Scotia to 1925* (D.A.Muise); #51 *The Origins of the Ontario Working Class 1867-1914* (M.J.Piva); #63 *Quebec Workers and the Industrial Revolution in the Late Nineteenth Century* (F.Harvey); #13 *The Blanketstiffs: Itinerant Railway Workers 1896-1914* (A.Ross McCormack); #10 *The Northern Ontario Mining Frontier 1880-1920* (G.A.Stelter); *Marie Blanchet: Valleyfield Cotton Weaver in 1908* (J. Rouillard); #21 *The British Columbia Mining Frontier 1880-1920* (P.Philips); #33 *Poverty and the Working Class in Toronto 1880-1914* (G.S. & L. Kealey); #66 *Canadian Women and the Second World War* (R.R.Pierson). Many others in the series that are not specifically listed here are nonetheless very useful. The series also comes with an index which makes it possible to design one's own material by selecting slides from a variety of sets, and with a booklet of teaching suggestions.

For print sources, I would begin with Desmond Morton's *Labour in Canada* (Toronto: Grolier, 1982)and Ken Osborne's *Canadians at Work: Labour, Unions and Industry in Canada* (Toronto: Prentice-Hall Canadiana Scrapbook Series, 1984). The multi-part historical magazine, *Horizon Canada*, which appeared a few years ago but can still be found in many school libraries contains a number of useful, short articles. The most relevant (in rough chronological order) are as follows: K.Osborne, *The Factory System*, 2, 302-7; B. Freeman, *Labour's Pains* (early unions), 6, 1489-95; F. Harvey, *Child Labour*, 1, 68-72; G.S.Kealey, *The Great Upheaval* (the Knights of Labour), 7, 1729-35; J. Rouillard, *A Life So Threadbare* (the early Quebec textile industry), 3, 590-5; C. MacDonald, *The Child Saver* (J.J.Kelso), 9, 2486-91; A.A.den Otter, *South Alberta Coal*, 7, 1982-7; A.R. McCormack, *Wobbly Wars*, 8, 2246-51; J. Pringle, *Labour's Year* (1919), 8, 2113-9; J. Pringle, *The Red Scare*, 3, 686-91; V. Fast, *Labour's Church*, 9, 2582-7; D. Frank, *Coal Wars* (the Nova Scotia coal industry), 4, 1046-51; A.Seager, *Seeing Red* (Communism and anti-Communism in the 1930's), 10, 2726-31; L.S.McDowell, *One Big Strike in Oshawa* (industrial unionism and the 1937 strike), 9, 2582-7; F.J.K.Griezic, *Mr. Tough Guy: Hal Banks*, 10, 2744-9. In addition, there are many other articles on related topics: check the index in the last two issues, #119-120 of Volume 10. The standard reference sources are also useful: the three volume *Historical Atlas of Canada*; the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*; and the *Canadian Encyclopedia*. Ken Osborne's *R.B.Russell and the Labour Movement* (Toronto: The

Book Society of Canada, 1979) focuses on the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike and was specially written for classroom use. Useful on unions and the labour process generally is a series of three high school books edited by Robert Laxer. They are *Unions and the Collective Bargaining Process; Union Organization and Strikes*; and *Technological Change and the Workforce*, all published by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education in 1978. They are no longer in print but can be found in libraries. Similarly out of print is a collection edited by Dwight Botting, Dennis Gerard, and Ken Osborne, *The Technology Connection* (Vancouver: Commcept Publishers, 1982). Particularly useful is Chapter 2, *"You, Technology and Work"*. Descriptions of work by workers can be found in a collection produced by the Social Action Commission of the Roman Catholic diocese of Charlottetown, P.E.I., *The Work Book: Witness to Injustice* (Charlottetown, 1982), which broadly follows Braverman's thesis about the degradation of work. I am enormously impressed with Bob Davis' article "History and Work: Rewriting the Curriculum", which appears as pp.147-170 of his *What Our High Schools Could Be* (Toronto: Our Schools Ourselves, 1990). For that matter, anyone interested in teaching should read the whole book. An equally valuable article for classroom use is Craig Heron's "Industrious Habits: Two Centuries of Work in Canada", which appeared in *The History & Social Science Teacher*, Spring, 1985, pp. 57-68. The Canadian Foundation for Economic Education has produced a classroom booklet on Canadian unions: G.B.Milling, *Understanding Canadian Labour Unions* (Toronto: Canadian Foundation for Economic Education, 1980). The booklet is currently being updated. The Canadian Labour Congress makes available a series of hand-outs called *Notes on Unions*, which contain the basic information. The student news magazine, *Canada and the World*, often contains relevant short articles, specifically intended for classroom use. It can be found in most high school libraries, and should be in all of them. There is a sound-filmstrip in the Prentice-Hall See, Hear Now series: N. Vichert, *Trades Unions: The Canadian Experience*. The magazine *Canadian Dimension* had a very useful and accessible special issue (December, 1979) on the past and present of the labour process in Canada. High school students should have no problems reading it and it is well worth digging out of the library.

Music can be found in P. Thomas, *Songs of the Northwest* [Saanichton: Hancock House, 1979]; the *Canadian I.W.W. Songbook* [Toronto: Industrial Workers of the World, 1990]; *Songs We Like to Sing* [Canadian Labour Congress]. There is also an American version which contains some different selections: *I.W.W. Songs* [Chicago: I.W.W., 1973 and subsequent printings]. Edith Fowkes' various collections of Canadian folk songs contain relevant material, especially her 1975 volume [with Joe Glazer], *Songs of Work and Protest*. Lots of good things can be found in Philip Foner, *American Labor Songs of the Nineteenth Century* [Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975]. There are also available on cassette and album various collections of labour songs such as that by Pete Seeger, *Talking Union and Other Songs* [Folkways FH5285] and the Travellers' *A Century of Song: The Travellers Salute Canada's Working People* [Arc A261], as well as modern productions of traditional work songs from the mines, the railways, the fur trade, and so forth. Teachers who wish to use art will find a British book helpful: Patrick Conner, *People At Work* [New York: Atheneum, 1982].

For teacher reference especially [but they are plainly written enough to be accessible to students], my choices for a very short list would be Desmond Morton and Terry Copp, *Working People: An Illustrated History of Canadian Labour* [Toronto: Deneau & Greenberg, 1980]; Bryan Palmer, *Working Class Experience: Rethinking the History of Canadian Labour 1800-1991* [Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992]; and Craig Heron, *The Canadian Labour Movement: A Short History* [Toronto, Lorimer, 1989]. Teachers who like to work with documents will find them in Michael Cross, *The Workingman in the Nineteenth Century [Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1974]*, and *Irving Abella and David Millar, The Canadian Worker in the Twentieth Century* [Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1978]. A goldmine for teaching is to be found in Greg Kealey's *Canada Investigates Industrialism: The Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital 1889* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973]. Though it has been much argued with since its appearance in 1974, Harry Braverman's *Labour and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* [New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974] remains for me a classic and highly readable text. Craig Heron and Robert Storey provide an invaluable survey of the history of the labour process, together with historical and contemporary case-studies in their *On the Job: Confronting the Labour Process in Canada* [Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1986]. For a view of what Canadian employers thought of labour, a rich source of teaching material is Michael Bliss. *A Living Profit: Studies in the Social History of Canadian Business 1883-1911* [Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1974]. There is a growing literature in Canadian working-class history and the most useful guide to it is probably to be found in the bibliographical notes to Bryan Palmer's book, *Working Class Experience*. There are also a couple of titles in the Canadian Historical Association booklet series: E.A. Forsey, *The Canadian Labour Movement: The First Ninety Years, 1802-1902*, and Irving Abella, *The Canadian Labour Movement 1902-1960*. Indispensable for anyone who wants to keep in touch

with the field is the twice-yearly journal of the Canadian Committee on Labour History, *Labour/Le Travail*. It ought to be in any self-respecting high school library and can be obtained by contacting its editor, himself one of the leading historians of the Canadian working class, Greg Kealey, at the History Department, Memorial University, St. John's, Newfoundland.

1993 saw the appearance of another teaching bibliography: J. Piker & J. Turk, "Labour Unions, The Labour Movement, Working People: Resources for Ontario High School Teachers and Students," in R.P. Coulter & I.F. Goodson [eds.], *Rethinking Vocationalism: Whose Work/Life is It?* [Toronto, Our Schools Ourselves, 1993], 181-196. A slightly older one that might still be available in resource centres is *Work and Workers: An Annotated Bibliography for Secondary Schools* [Committee on Labour Education in the Schools, Henson College, Dalhousie University, Halifax, 1986]. The Vancouver and Toronto school boards also issued resource guides during the 1980's.

Of specific reference to Manitoba is Doug Smith's *Let Us Rise: An Illustrated History of the Manitoba Labour Movement*, [Vancouver: New Star Books, 1985]. My own choices for dealing with the 1919 Strike are K. McNaught & D.J. Bercuson, *The Winnipeg General Strike 1919*, [Don Mills: Longman, 1974]; D.J. Bercuson, *Confrontation at Winnipeg: Industrial Relations and the General Strike*, [Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1974]; the special issue of *Labour/Le Travail* [13, Spring 1984]; N. Penner [ed.], *Winnipeg 1919: The Strikers' Own History of the Winnipeg General Strike*, [Toronto: Lewis & Samuel, 1973]; and the collection of newspaper articles compiled by J.E. Rea in the old Canadian History Through the Press series. There is also an out-of-print booklet of sources edited by A. Balawyder [Toronto: Copp Clark, 1967] which is useful, and a kit in the Jackdaw series prepared by P. Kidd.

As valuable as books are, it would be ironic if the study of work and the workplace became a purely book-based activity. More than most topics, it calls out for an experiential approach. One of the most valuable resources for the classroom are workers themselves. Much can be achieved by carefully planned visits to worksites. Working men and women should be asked to visit the classroom to talk about their experience of work. Employers similarly should be asked to talk about their side of the picture. Local unions are also a valuable source.

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The Role of Public Schools: Manitoba Federation of Labour

In 1884, a master mechanic working at Winnipeg's Canadian Pacific Railway shops proposed the establishment of a library to be used by the men and women who worked for the railway. By the following year, the library, which was located in a mess-room next to the shops, had over 500 books and was open from nine in the morning to nine at night. While workers had to pay a dollar a year to use the library, it was enormously successful. Aside from lending books and serving as a home for games of checkers, the library was used for classes on topics as diverse as mechanical drawing, poetry, the thoughts of Samuel Johnson and the coal fields of the Canadian northwest.

In 1885, the Winnipeg Workingman's Association and the Winnipeg Assembly of the Knights of Labour attempted to establish a Mechanics' Institute to provide upgrading to Winnipeg workers. The following year the Knights of Labour wrote to the Winnipeg School Board asking that a night school be established. In that same year the Knights opened a reading room in their Pioneer Hall.

The first item on the labour movement's list of desired reforms for the 1894 civic election was a free public library. When a bylaw to raise money to build such a library was defeated in 1898, the president of the Winnipeg Labour Council identified the defeat as one of the drawbacks of a system which only allowed property owners to vote on money bylaws.

When a Manitoba Royal Commission looked into industrial training in 1910, the labour movement came out in favour of a "thorough technical education for the benefit of the instructed", or as one trade unionist told the Commission, "the making of more competent men and women". To this end, labour opposed the establishment of purely trade-oriented schools in favour of a system which provided both technical and academic training.

In subsequent years the labour movement agitated for free, compulsory education, an end to fees for books and for writing examinations, improved working conditions for teachers, and greater access to post-secondary education. From its earliest days, the Manitoba labour movement has seen education and training as being crucial to the success of its members and their children and an important part of any civilized society. And from the beginning, labour has supported initiatives which sought to educate the whole person, which took place in the public sphere, which was provided as a right, which saw learning as a lifelong activity, and which the labour movement had some influence over.

The need for training and education is once more on the public agenda. There exists a real potential to expand the range and quality of publicly supported training. But the labour movement does not intend to abandon the core values that have guided its thinking about training and education.

The current crisis

Despite all the public rhetoric about the importance of education and training, the record demonstrates that the federal and provincial governments have been reducing their support for public education over the past decade. At the same time governments have been cutting back on programs which provide a measure of equity in terms of who is able to receive a post-secondary education.

The federal government has placed a six-year freeze on the Canada Student Loan program. As a result, loans are being reduced and students are being forced to start paying the loans back after one month of graduation. In addition, the Manitoba government has replaced student bursaries with loans.

Editor's note: *This article is taken from a much longer document, entitled* ***Education and Training: A Policy for Manitoba,*** *approved by the Manitoba Federation of Labour in 1993. Other sections of the document, which are not included here, deal with universities, colleges, apprenticeship and training programs. Readers interested in studying the whole document should contact the Manitoba Federation of Labour, 275 Broadway, Winnipeg R3C 4M6.*

Changes made in 1993 have created a crisis for low-income students. A unique program designed to help students on welfare get an education was eliminated, putting the schooling of 1,100 students at risk. ACCESS programs, designed to help groups which have been historically denied access to post-secondary education, have seen their provincial funding cut by an average of 14 percent, while the Winnipeg Education Centre has had its provincial funding reduced by 20 percent. The New Careers Program, which had worked for over two decades to provide training for aboriginal people, women, people with disabilities and members of visible minority groups with occupational training has had its budget cut by $1.7 million. Manitoba has the lowest rate of young people enrolling in post-secondary education in the country; 15 percent compared with a national average of 22 percent. Students are now being charged $45 to write the test for their General Equivalency Diploma.

Schools and universities are having their budgets cut and their autonomy reduced. In 1993, universities had their budgets cut by 6 percent, public schools by two percent and Red River Community College by $1,200,000. As it cut funding to public education, the government has increased funding to private schools by over 150 percent during the last five years.

When members of the public discuss how skilled — or unskilled — Manitoba workers are, and whether or not the education system is performing acceptably, much of the blame should be placed directly on the shoulders of governments which have steadily reduced their commitment to education and to broadening access to education.

Since the mid-1980's, the federal government has been withdrawing its support for education and health care funding through reductions in the increases to the Established Program Fund. In education, this has had a disastrous impact on public schools, community colleges, and universities. We believe this process should be reversed. If the federal government is serious in its commitment to education and training it should immediately end its freeze on transfer payments and set about bringing them back to the levels of the 1970's. In the area of training, the federal government has failed to meet its commitment to spend $2 billion a year on training.

In all of these cases non-profit, publicly accountable systems are being starved of funds while a profit-driven, private sector training industry has been allowed to grow at public expense.

Public Schools

The central institution for any education or training policy is the public school system. The labour movement has played an important role in the creation of free, compulsory, public education systems around the world. Labour has also been instrumental in attempting to change schools from being institutions which either prepared the children of the elite for university or supplied marginal and inadequate training to working class children to prepare them for industrial jobs, into institutions which, in theory, would give each child the education he or she needs to become a fully participating member of society.

The public education system remains contested terrain. Many people have supported compulsory education because they saw it as a system of social control, one which would take a potentially rebellious working class and socialize it into accepting a subservient social role. This vision was at odds with the vision of a school system which provided people with an education in order to allow them to liberate themselves. These two conceptions of the education system have always been in conflict, although the upper hand has generally been held by those who wish to see the schools instruct the children of working people in the virtues of being "hard-working, temperate and peaceable". There is, of course, nothing wrong with temperance and hard work or even of being of a peaceable nature, but it is not enough. Labour does not wish to see education reduced to simple training, nor does it believe the standards of the business community are the only standards which should be applied when we assess or reform the education system.

It is useful to see the role of the public schools as preparing young people for their roles as: (1) workers, (2) citizens, and (3) individuals.

As **workers**, they need the knowledge, skills and dispositions to allow them to find a worthwhile job. These would include communication skills, the ability to work cooperatively and independently, the ability to think, plan, and make decisions, and a good base of general knowledge.

As **citizens**, they need all of the above plus a good knowledge of local and world history, a working knowledge of social, economic and political systems, the skills and disposition to participate in the political process, and values of tolerance and respect for human rights.

As **individuals**, they need an introduction to all that is helpful to a well rounded life — arts, sports, learning, and recreation.

We believe that this should be the system's goal in the case of all children. To this end, we oppose systems which attempt to classify and sort children into various streams. Historically, this has had the effect of discriminating against the children of working class parents since their children are invariably streamed into non-university entrance programs at a higher rate than the children of middle class parents. Numerous studies have indicated that social class is the best predictor of how children will be dealt with by the school system. As long as this is the case, streaming

will remain a subtle, and sometimes not-so-subtle, form of discrimination.

Instead, we believe there should be a common curriculum that all children must be exposed to in the public school system. This does not mean we advocate that each class be learning the same material on any given day or that local concerns, issues and cultural experiences should not be incorporated into the curriculum of each school division. But it does mean that a graduate of our public system must be more than simply a willing and capable worker. Graduates ought to have the skills, knowledge and dispositions that will allow them to exercise their rights to participate in society, and, where those rights are denied, to acquire them. A common curriculum would also address issues such as racism, sexism, social inequality, social history (including labour studies and the rôle of unions and the union movement in society and the workplace) and political action. The concept that the best outcome of a public school education is attending university, and that all other results are second best must be re-adjusted. All students should be encouraged to examine such options as community colleges, co-operative education, and apprenticeship training. Later in this policy paper, we shall discuss post-secondary education, co-operative education, and apprenticeship at length, but it is worthwhile underlining at this point our belief that all of these institutions and programs must be given a higher profile within the public education system, and it must be done in a way that will allow students of all socio-economic backgrounds to make informed decisions about their future.

The abolition of streaming will require changes in what goes on in the classroom. There is a need for lower teacher-student ratios, more preparation time, and additional aides and support workers. Lifelong learning is as important for teachers as for any other group in society; they must be provided with study leaves and other professional opportunities to update their skills and knowledge.

The current depression is wreaking havoc among working class families and placing unprecedented pressure on young people. Manitoba has the country's worst child poverty record and more and more teenagers are being forced to work longer and longer hours to help support themselves and their families. Social services must be closely integrated with the public school system. The model is the community school, in which the school becomes an integral part of a community-focused institution providing a range of social services. The era of families where one parent worked and one stayed at home is long over and schools must adapt to this changing reality.

Finally, the school system must become more accountable to local communities and should create institutions that allow parents and other community members meaningful input into the operation of the schools. The current government is moving in the opposite direction as it reduces the autonomy of local, democratically-elected, school boards.

In short, the labour movement supports:

- the abolition of streaming;
- the establishment of a common curriculum which recognizes that skills which are critical to some students are critical to all;
- improved working conditions for teachers and all education workers;
- a reformed curriculum and reformed teacher training;
- the provision of a broad range of social services; and
- increased accountability to local communities.

The education system we envision would be run by locally elected school boards. Where required by legislation of necessity, services to remote communities should be delivered by the same model, such as in the case of the Frontier School Division or French language school boards. In the case of special needs, provincially funded and operated institutions should deliver educational curriculum and services at the same level as the school board system.

We recognize that many of the proposals we have made would require an increase in spending on education. This should be neither surprising nor disturbing. We do not believe that spending on education is a drag on the economy. It creates good jobs and it creates talented citizens. It is an investment which pays off. As stated above, we believe the federal government must start to pay its fair share of education costs. The provincial government should do the same. Property tax is an essentially regressive and unfair form of taxation. An over-reliance on it allows wealthier communities to fund richer education programs than poorer communities can afford. We recommend that the provincial government increase its support of the public education system to the point where it pays for at least 80 percent of the cost of education. We also recommend that the province also remove its cap on school boards' ability to raise taxes.

Finally, we believe a public education should be public. For this reason we are opposed to public funds being used to support private schools.

Q. How long have you been working in these mines? A. Two years.

Q. How old are you? A. 13 next August.

Q. Have you been working all the time? A. Yes.

Q. How many hours a day do you work? A. Eight and ten ...

Q. What do you do with your money? A. I give it to my mother.

Q. Have you a father? A. Yes.

Q. Is he in the mines? A. Yes.

Q. Did he want you to work there? A. Yes.

Q. Did you want to work there yourself, or would you rather go to school? A. I would rather work in the pit.

Nova Scotia evidence to the Royal Commission on the relations between Labour and Capital, 1889.

Teaching about labour and industry with cartoons

Ken Osborne

The following cartoons date from the years between approximately 1880 and 1920, and deal with a miscellany of connected topics, essentially centering on the growth and impact of capitalism in Canada. The first cartoons deal with John A. Macdonald's National Policy, which gave industrial capitalism a huge boost and a large measure of protection. Then come cartoons dealing with left-wing protest against capitalism, focussing on the years before the First World War and the beliefs of the Industrial Workers of the World. I have not included activities for the cartoons, since teachers use cartoons in ways that suit their own style. I have, however, provided reasonably extensive notes so that teachers can derive the maximum benefit from them. We tend to use cartoons as inquiry exercises and this is obviously a very useful way to use them. An alternative approach is to use them to illustrate lectures and to stimulate a more informal style of discussion. As I have tried to show in the notes that follow, a cartoon can serve to bring together a lot of information, while at the same time serving as a visual stimulus and point of reference for students.

Cartoon 1: The Tariff

This cartoon represents Laurier upholding the Canadian tariff and refusing demands from some elements of the Liberal Party for total free trade. Laurier's tariff magnet is attracting the money-bags of U.S. capital over the tariff wall. Many Canadian capitalists welcomed the flow of U.S. capital into Canada, as they did the tariff's effect of inducing U.S. firms to establish branch plants in Canada in order to avoid import duties on their products. Such capital, in their view, would stimulate the Canadian economy, as well as providing useful opportunities for profit. Here is how the trade magazine, *Canadian Manufacture*, put it in 1893:

> *As to the views of protectionists regarding the introduction into Canada of foreign capitalists and their capital, this may be said: whenever a man comes to Canada to live and to contribute in any manner to the material success of the country, he may very properly be considered a Canadian. His birthplace may be Europe, Asia, Africa, an Isle of the sea, or even the land of the Yankee, and protectionists will be ready and willing to acknowledge him a Canadian. There would be no objection to him whatever because of the place of his nativity. And the same as regards his money.* [cit. in Michael Bliss, *A Living Profit: Studies in the Social History of Canadian Business 1883-1911*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1974, p. 109]

On this theme of tariff protection, this poem could also be useful:

When asked what does Protection mean
One may this answer give:
'Tis pay for work and work for pay,
To live and to let live,
The land to till, the mine to drill,
The forest to remove;
With all industrial wheels at work
Our country to improve.
When each to other, hand to hand
Will true protectors be;
One grows the grain, one makes the goods,
Another fells the tree.

Chorus —
Then we'll all as true Canadians
Together stand or fall.
Let us each other then protect,
And heaven protect us all.

With righteous cause and justest laws,
Resources past compare,
We then should get of immigrants
Who want to work full share;
And here to every one who came, while doing no one harm,
We'd give them all protection for
Mill, forest, mine and farm.
And then by giving work to all
In every relation,
We'd make this Canada of ours
A most progressive nation.

It matters not how rich the soil
On prairie, hill or plain;

No country yet grew truly great
By only growing grain.
So with the farmer we should have
Also the artisan
And find all sorts of work to do
For every lab'ring man.
Then when the stranger reaches here
We give him not a stone;
Of old 'twas told, it was not meet
To live by bread alone.

Canadian Manufacturer, 2 July, 1897. in Bliss *op. cit.*, p. 113.

This poem, with its paean to the tariff, its celebration of cooperation among merchants, manufacturers and farmers, its promise of jobs for all and of class co-operation, all while reserving final pride of place to the industrialist, could also be used very appropriately with the next cartoon.

Source: M. Bliss. *A Living Profit*, p. 101.

Cartoon 2: Under the National Policy

This is a poster rather than a cartoon and is part of the campaign for the National Policy of protective tariffs inaugurated by Macdonald in 1879. Note that the lower picture attacks not only free trade but also a revenue tariff. Obviously, a distinction is being attempted here between a protective tariff [which is good] and a money-raising tariff [which is bad]. The preferred goal is to develop Canadian industry not to raise revenue. The argument of the poster is straightforward: a protective tariff would stimulate and protect industry, which would provide jobs, which would provide customers for the farmer, so that everyone would gain: capital, labour and agriculture. Here is how Macdonald's Minister of Finance, Sir Leonard Tilley, put in his budget speech in 1879:

> *The time has arrived, I think, when it will become our duty to decide whether the thousands of men throughout the length and breadth of this country who are unemployed, shall seek employment in another country, or shall find it in this Dominion; the time has arrived when we are to decide whether we will be simply hewers of wood and drawers of water; whether we be simply agriculturalists raising wheat, and lumbermen producing more lumber than we can use, or Great Britain and the United States will take from us at remunerative prices; whether we will confine our attention to the fisheries and certain other small industries, and cease to be what we have been, and not rise to be what I believe we are destined to be under wise and judicious legislation, or whether we will inaugurate a policy that will, by its provisions, say to the industries of the country, we will give you sufficient protection; we will give you a market for what you can produce... The time has certainly arrived when we must consider whether we will allow matters to remain as they are, with the result of being an unimportant and uninteresting portion of Her Majesty's Dominions, or will rise to the position, which I believe Providence has destined us to occupy, by means of which, I believe, though they may be over sanguine, which the country believes are calculated to bring prosperity and happiness to the people, to give employment to the thousands who are unoccupied, and to make this a great and prosperous country, as we all desire and hope it will be.* [House of Commons Debates, 14 March, 1879, p. 429; cit. in R.C. Brown & M.E. Prang, *Canadian Historical Documents: Confederation to 1949*, Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1966. p. 24]

In the top picture a happy, well-dressed farmer drives his wagon into a thriving town. His horses are well-groomed, his wagon is loaded, the streets are prosperous. Factory chimneys smoke busily. Streets and buildings are in good repair. In the background the harbour is full of ships.

In the bottom picture everything has changed. The farmer's clothes are patched; his wagon is nearly empty, its wheels are broken, his horses are skeletal and one has a bandaged leg. The town is in equally bad shape: starving animals roam the streets; the buildings are wrecked; the chimneys have stopped smoking; "for sale" and "to let" notices appear; telephone poles sag; bystanders loiter on the sidewalk; and the harbour is almost empty, with no steamships in it at all. And the farmer laments the loss of his friends, the "well paid mechanics" [i.e., mechanics in the old-fashioned sense of the word, meaning workers generally].

In promoting his National Policy, Macdonald promised to "make the tall chimneys smoke" in contrast to the lean years of the Mackenzie government of 1873-78. These two pictures put his promise into visual form, though one assumes that they are primarily aimed at a farm audience.

Source: Public Archives of Canada, #95470.

Cartoon 3: A different view of the National Policy.

This cartoon was drawn by the great nineteenth century Canadian cartoonist, J.W. Bengough, and is taken from his satirical magazine, *Grip* [10 June, 1882, issue]. Bengough was a reform liberal in his own fashion, and constantly attacked John A. Macdonald, while, at the same time, demonstrating a sort of grudging admiration for Macdonald's personal charm and political wheeling and dealing, if not for the substance of his policies. There is a useful short accoun' of Bengough and *Grip* in P.B. Waite,

Macdonald: His Life and World, [McGraw-Hill-Ryerson, 1975, pp. 122-126]; and another in P. Desbarats and T. Mosher, *The Hecklers: A History of Canadian Political Cartooning and a Cartoonists' History of Canada*, [Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1979, pp. 40-52].

The cartoon represents Macdonald [the old woman, but notice her pail labelled "vote"] making an offer to a "monopolist." Notice the standard stereotype here: top hat, clean cuffs, cane and considerable girth. The monopolist has presumably observed that the pasture is poor, thus reflecting Bengough's Liberal suspicion that the National Policy had little to offer, and certainly not to working people, amounting to nothing more than a subsidy to capital. The working class [and note Bengough's use of the word "class" here] is represented by the skinny cow with the "tax" weight tied to its tail, tethered to the "tariff" in "starvation pasture" and surrounded by various taxes [coal, flour, sugar] and high prices [potatoes at 95 cents a peck — note the old avoirdupois measurement]. the view is of "aristocratic landlordism", watered by "monopoly river", and with "monopoly" hills in the background, with smoking factory chimneys on the skyline. For Bengough, apparently, the National Policy was merely a subsidy to monopoly capital at the expense of the working class. Meanwhile, the working class cow is kept quiescent by contemplating the clouds — "government promises, high wages, cheap living, and wait a little longer." The caption of the cartoon speaks for itself.

Finally, note that the cartoon appeared on 10 June, 1882. It was one of Bengough's comments on the federal election campaign that was then going on, and in which the Liberals were offering a free trade alternative to the National Policy. Election day was June 20, and Macdonald's party won with 139 seats to 71, winning in every province except Manitoba.

Source: *Grip*, 10 June, 1882.

Cartoon 4: The Western Free Trade spirit: Who carries the load?

This cartoon appeared in September, 1910, in *Industrial Canada*, the official publication of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association. The date is relevant, since the cartoon is a comment on the federal election campaign that was then in full swing, and in which reciprocity with the United States was a major issue. The cartoon represents the manufacturers' view of the issue. The whole "weight of government" is being pulled by the horse of "eastern manufacturing interests", driven by the "east driver", while the "westerner" placidly smokes his pipe, keeping his hands in his pockets. To add insult to injury, the wagon not only carries the "weight of government," but the horse of the "western grain growers association" is also getting a free ride. Obviously, western agriculture was not at all pulling its weight. Rather, eastern industry carried the whole load. Notice that the stereotype of the capitalist is continued even here but in suitably modified form. The top hat remains, as do the striped pants and the spats, but the large stomach has disappeared. This capitalist is lean and hard-working, and even has his coat off. "Who carries the load?" indeed! As is well known, the Conservatives, and their manufacturing supporters, won the election, and reciprocity died the death until very recently, when it was brought back to life as the Free Trade Agreement with the U.S. Canadian capitalists were still to enjoy the benefit of the protective tariff.

Source: *Industrial Canada*, September, 1910.

Cartoon 5: The "Old Man" counting up his money

This cartoon is taken from a business magazine of the late nineteenth century. It depicts a common complaint of employers that they worked far harder and carried far heavier responsibilities than did their employees. To make things worse, their efforts were not even acknowledged. A close look at the balance sheet the "old man" is holding shows that the largest single item is "payroll", creating a deficit of $810. One reason why many employers rejected unions was that collective agreements took an important item of cost out of their hands by making it impossible for them to cut wages. As we have learned in the last year or two, it needs legislation to override a collective agreement.

This cartoon could be accompanied by these words from the *Journal of Commerce* of 5 February, 1892:

> *...between the position of the employer and the employed, there is a radical difference. The employer puts into an enterprise his capital, his experience, his business skill. He ventures these on very treacherous waters. After long years of struggling, of keenest anxiety, and of labours most exhausting, he often finds himself bereft of his capital, his strength and his energy, he is bankrupt and broken-hearted when too old to have any hope or chance to recover his position. During all those years, those he employed have drawn their wages week in and week out, they took no risks, their sleep was never destroyed by anxiety over trade troubles, and when the master is ruined and his capital gone, they do not share in his misfortunes. Indeed, often times saving men during the whole period in which their master has been going downhill to ruin, have been going uphill to a certain competency [=savings -K.O.]. On what principle of equity then can those who run none of the risk of a business expect to share in its profits?* [cited in Michael Bliss, *A Living Profit*, pp. 65-66]

This point of view helps to explain why many employers saw unions as a violation of their freedom of action. Unions bore none of the responsibilities of operating a company. They drove up costs and refused to take what employers saw as a realistic view of things. Moreover, they created unnecessary barriers between employers and employees. A small point here: notice how the passage quoted above slides between the archaic and disappearing usage, "masters", with its overtones not only of dominance but also of personal responsibility [in the sense that a "master" has a bond with his "men"] and the much more modern and impersonal, "employer", with its connotation of a purely legal and impersonal relationship. Capitalist opposition to unions was often voiced, perhaps most directly by the B.C. coal magnate, James Dunsmuir, in his evidence to the 1903 Royal Commission on Labour Disputes in that province:

> Q. Would you explain to this committee why in particular you objected to the Western Federation more than you would to any other kind of a union? — A. I object to all unions, federated or local, or any other kind. I think I can treat with my own men without the interference of a union.
>
> Q. What is the difficulty which you think would arise if unions were formed among your men? — A. There is always a committee appointed to interfere with the management of the work. It is called a pit committee. They come around and say the men should have this, they should have that. They simply take the management of the mine.
>
> Q. Do you think the men themselves have as much freedom where unions are in existence as where they are not? — A. No, I do not.
>
> Q. Why? — A. He is dictated to by agitators or heads of the union, the president or secretary, and whatever they say the men have got to do. They talk about being slaves — they are slaves to the union, these three or four heads, or what they call the executive.
>
> Q. Do you know of any real cause for difficulty which the men have now in these mines? — A. No, I do not. The only trouble is because I won't let them belong to the union. They can belong to the union if they like — I don't care. I have my rights. I can hire them if I like, and they can work if they like.
>
> Q. On the other hand, if the men persist in joining the union? A. I can't stop them.
>
> Q. Then, they do it at the peril of leaving your employment at any rate? A. Yes. [Royal Commission on Industrial Disputes in British Columbia, 1903. Sessional Papers, XXXVIII [13], 1904, pp. 238-9.]

It does not take much imagination to pick up the tone of outrage spilling over into contempt in Dunsmuir's words, but it perhaps helps also to realize that his coal operations were among the most dangerous and despotically run in the country, and that he was plagued by frequent and bitter strikes.

Source: M. Bliss, *A Living Profit*, p. 65

Cartoon 6: Some aspects of the eight-hour day movement

This cartoon appeared in *Industrial Canada*, the journal of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, in September, 1908. It represents another complaint of many employers, namely that unions restricted working hours and thus made it impossible to operate a profitable company. Both management and labour accepted the principle of "a fair day's work for a fair day's pay" but they had very different views of what constituted fairness. For an employer, the right to extract maximum value for wages paid was one of the keys to profit. For workers, their labour power was all that they had with which to bargain, and like any capitalist, they were going to buy cheap and sell dear. As an American organizer put it in 1892: "Men who are compelled to sell their labour, very naturally desire to sell the smallest portion of their time for the largest possible price. They are merchants of their time. It is their only available capital." [cited in B.D. Palmer, *A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Workers and Industrial Capitalism in Hamilton, Ontario, 1860 - 1914*. Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press: 1979, p. 126.]

Most employers accepted limitations on the working hours of women and children, but only a few accepted legal limits on men's hours. An essential part of an employer's freedom, in this view, was the right to fix hours of work according to the needs of the market. Here, for example, is the Toronto Globe of 23 March, 1872:

> There is no inherent virtue in any particular number of hours, showing it to be right and all others wrong. As well may you attempt to pay all men the same wages, as to make all work for the same time. The good sense of mankind has heretofore regarded ten hours for work, seven for sleep, and seven for food, enjoyment and improvement, as a wise and healthful distribution of time for an able-bodied man engaged in ordinary laborious avocations; and the more closely the matter is examined, the nearer the truth, we fancy, will this term be found to be... [I]n the vast majority of industrial pursuits in Canada, the man who thinks ten hours hurtful or oppressive, is too lazy to earn his bread.

Nearly forty years later, in 1909, here is the secretary of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association on the same theme, but using an economic rather than a moral argument:

> *But there is reason in all things, and the agitation for shorter hours and higher wages should hold itself*

within bounds. Where the hours or the conditions of employment are such that the health of the worker is endangered, the unions are justified in demanding relief. Further, they are to be commended in asking for a working day that will leave the individual some time for recreation and self-improvement. But how far do they propose to go? In many European industries, they are still struggling to get it down as low as the ten-hour basis. In America, the cry is all for an eight-hour day. In Australia the eight-hour day is so old a story that workmen are now seriously considering calling for a six-hour day. Where do the unions intend to draw the line? In some kinds of employment it is possible to go much further than in others. The stone mason, for example, can always have shorter hours than the factory hand, simply because you cannot import buildings, whereas you can import factory-made goods. When the cost of production of a given article in Canada, by reason of shorter hours, begins to exceed the cost of production of the same article abroad, plus freight and duty, that article ceases to be made here, and those who found employment in its manufacture are thrown out of work. Organized labour cannot afford to shut its eyes to this side of the question, for there is such a thing as killing the goose that lays the golden egg. [G.M. Murray, "Another View of labor Unions," in *Industrial Canada*, April, 1909, pp. 746-7]

For its part, the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada made the eight-hour day part of its official program in the 1890's [the rallying cry throughout union circles was "eight hours for work, eight hours for rest, eight hours for what we will."] And "Eight Hours" was one of the most popular labour songs of the period:

We mean to make things over;
We're tired of toil for naught;
We may have enough to live on,
But never an hour for thought.
We want to feel the sunshine,
We want to smell the flowers;
We are sure that God has willed it;
And we mean to have eight hours.

In the same spirit Kootenay miners' unions in 1899 issued this declaration:

If miners are to be considered in the same category as so much machinery or some kind of animal that lives on black bread and hog fat, needs no books, can live in a rude hut, or sleep in a mining company bunkhouse without being dissatisfied, then there is no cause for quarrel over how many hours he shall or shall not work. Conceding him to be a human being, a modern man able to read, think and appreciate the good things of life as others do, then we contend that eight hours are sufficient for men to work underground. [cit. in J. Mouat, "The Genesis of Western Exceptionalism: British Columbia's Hard-Rock Miners, 1895-1903," in *Canadian Historical Review*, LXXI, 3 [September, 1990], pp. 322-323]

Source: *Industrial Canada*, September, 1908, p. 93.

Cartoon 7: The Trade Unionist makes war against the community.

With this vicious cartoon the gloves are obviously off. It originated in the United States but was reprinted in *Industrial Canada*. The years leading up to the First World War were years of increasingly bitter and often violent industrial conflict in Europe and in North America with employers using the resources of the state [courts, army, police] for all that they worth. Not surprisingly, strikers often fought back. To quote one Canadian study of industrial conflict: "...from 1901 to 1913, according to the Labour Gazette, there were 14 large strikes in widely separate localities across Canada in which one or more of the following occurred: riots and 'mob violence'; property damage; personal injury; and in two cases, deaths. Eleven of these strikes led to the involvement of militia or regular military forces. By provinces, British Columbia alone accounted for six such disputes; Ontario accounted for three and Quebec two; Manitoba and Nova Scotia each experienced one; and, one, a railway strike, was interprovincial in scope." [S. M. Jamieson, *Times of Trouble: Labour Unrest and Industrial Conflict in Canada, 1900-1966*. Study 22 for the Task Force on Labour Relations, Ottawa, 1968, p. 67] In this context, then, the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 appears not as a bolt from the blue, as one text used to say, but as part of a long gathering of forces. As labour and capital confronted each other in these years, tensions mounted, as this cartoon demonstrates. Its view of unions needs no comment. Towering over everything around him, fierce and muscular, armed with a huge club, and obviously beyond all reason and control, the barbaric unionist smashes everything in sight. It appears as if another top-hatted, stout capitalist has fallen directly beneath the club. Apart from the sheer virulence of the cartoon, what is striking is its reversal of reality. In actuality, unions were rarely a match for capital, and especially not when the state threw the police and the army into the struggle on the side of capital, as often happened. In Canada, for example, it took until 1943 and the crisis of the Second World War for workers even to win the legal right of union recognition by their employers.

Cartoon 8: The Government "Investigating" Monopoly.

Here is J.W. Bengough again, with a more realistic view of the power of capital. The cartoon is Bengough's comment on the Macdonald government's attempt at anti-combines legislation in 1889, which resulted from a parliamentary inquiry into price-fixing in the wholesale grocery trade in Canada. Michael Bliss describes the legislation as "utterly useless" [*A Living Profit*, p. 39].

With some exceptions, employers defended combines and price-fixing as necessary for the survival of companies, big and small. Excessive competition, they argued, could benefit only the largest firms, which had the resources to withstand the struggle, and so would end by harming the consumer by leading inexorably to monopoly. Bengough was obviously not convinced, thus putting the word "investigating" in inverted commas to show his skepticism. Monopoly was far too big and powerful, in Bengough's view, for these puny government efforts [notice John A. himself on the nose, holding his lantern]. Perhaps, indeed, the suggestion is that government was not serious anyway. Perhaps Bengough was asking that fundamentally radical question: where does the real power lie? He certainly has not drawn an attractive facial portrait of monopoly, and he has made it monumentally gigantic in comparison to the tiny governmental figures climbing over it. Several carry lanterns; one is trying to dislodge a monocle many times his own size; two are cautiously looking into the ears; one has a drill and appears to have drawn a few drops of blood; one is trying to pry open the lips. There is no top hat this time, but once again the monopolist looks very well fed.

Source: M. Bliss, *A Living Profit*, p. 48.

Cartoon 9: Miss Canada Barmaid

Here is Bengough again, this time in 1886. The issue of temperance is perhaps slightly tangential to the subject of the development of capitalism in Canada, but only slightly. Liquor and beer were, after all, substantial businesses in their own right and some Canadians established huge fortunes from them. Moreover, the tavern played an important part in the lives of many [though not all] working people. These two facts together bothered middle-class radicals like Bengough, who was a dedicated temperance man [like J.S. Woodsworth and some other left of center radicals]. Bengough shared the view that alcohol was the ruin of working class men and women and destructive of family life. He also found it unacceptable that capitalists were allowed to make profits from the beer and liquor trade, with government itself benefitting through taxes and license fees. Equally objectionable was the fact that the capitalists had it both ways: having paid out wages to their workers, they got most of their money back, with profit, through the sale of alcohol. For the most part, however, labour leaders stayed aloof from calls for prohibition, seeing it as something that would affect the poor much more than the rich, who would be able to find ways to circumvent it.

Nonetheless, taverns played an important role in working-class life, though they often served to separate the 'rough' from the 'respectable.' A spectacular example of a working class tavern was Joe Beef's Canteen in Montreal, which catered to a large clientele of casual labourers. It sold food as well as beer; provided entertainment and cheap lodgings, and even tools, since the owner, an anti-authoritarian and republican Irishman called Charles McKiernan, would lend out picks and shovels to workers who needed them. The tavern housed a miniature zoo of assorted animals, including bears, and was decorated with skeletons and curiosities preserved in jars. Throughout, McKiernan was a supporter of the Conservatives and a champion of the poor. He provided food and drink and moral support and advice to strikers, and, when he died in 1889, his funeral was attended by representatives of some fifty labour societies. For more information, see Peter de Lottinville, "Joe Beef of Montreal: Working Class Culture and the Tavern, 1869-1889," in *Labour/Le Travail, 8/9* [1981-82], 9-40; or a short summary in Bryan Palmer, *The Working Class Experience: Rethinking the History of Canadian Labour, 1800-1991*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1992: 102-106]

Judging from this cartoon, Bengough would not have been happy with Joe Beef's or indeed any other tavern. He depicts his view of the effects of alcohol and also criticizes the Canadian government ..om benefitting from it, hence the label on the cash-box, "Revenue shared by Canada." Thus, also, the demure Miss Canada stands behind the bar, side-by-side with the devil himself. How long will she keep her purity?, one wonders. Note the inscriptions on the keg — "warranted to counteract all the effects of Church, Home and School, and to ensure Vice and Poverty." Similar sentiments are to be found in the license notice at the top right of the picture, and, to drive his point home, Bengough has labelled all the bottles: Ruin Rum, Riot Gin, Anti-Virtue Brandy, Murder Malt, Anti-School Whisky, and so on. The effects of all this on the customers needs no elaboration: men, women and children are all affected. A useful teaching resource on the whole question is Graeme Decarie, *Prohibition in Canada*, Volume #29 in the Canada's Visual History series.

Source: *Grip*, 1886 [I have lost the precise reference].

Cartoon 10: The employers' union

This cartoon appeared about 1910 in a strike leaflet. It represents the trade union view of one the union movement's

bugbears: the company union, formed by employers to keep out any outside organizers by conceding the shell of unionization but not the substance. At best, a company union might win a few concessions for its members. At worst, it would sell them out. It would never strike. And from the class conscious unionists' viewpoint, it would ignore the real struggle between the classes, in the vain search for co-operation between capital and labour.

In this cartoon, the employer embodies the usual stereotypes — high collar, frock coat, clean cuffs, large stomach, cigar — and is making the workers a unique offer: "Ten hours' work for eight hours' pay." The employees are thrilled: "It's nice of you;" "Lovely;" and "It's much better than striking." Revealingly, the workers' leader is tagged, "The no strike union" — reminding us of how seriously unions take the strike weapon. The setting of the picture is worth noting: the employer is obviously on his own turf and very much in command of things. He is receiving the workers on his turf and on his terms. Hence, he sits while they stand. Traditionally, unionists have described their periodic visits to power-holders as "cap in hand" sessions, and there is a very cap in hand [literally, in fact] atmosphere about this meeting. There is presumably a deliberate symbolism in the portrayal of the workers: eminently respectable, though rather "nerdy" and definitely meek and mild. Perhaps the fact that the dispute involved retail clerks is important, since such workers had to maintain certain standards of dress and deportment — though here one of the workers has the seat of his pants patched. This is, incidentally, presumably because of the retail clerk context, one of the few cartoons even to portray a woman. The absence of women in all these cartoons is itself revealing of contemporary attitudes and is worth raising with students. Here is the comment of a B.C. woman activist in the years before 1914: "The story of women in industry ... is the story of struggle not only against the capitalist class who have exploited them mercilessly, but also against the men of their own class who said because they were women they must not expect to be looked upon as co-workers or receive the same pay when doing the same kind or quantity of work." [cited in Linda Kealey, "Canadian Socialism and the Woman Question, 1900-1914," in *Labour/Le Travail*, 13 [1984], p. 98]

Source: U.B.C. Library Special Collections.

Cartoon 11: The pyramid of the Capitalist system

This cartoon was produced in 1911 and was a favourite of the Industrial Workers of the World and left-wing activists generally. It makes an interesting contrast with Cartoon 7 [the one portraying the brutal unionist destroying the community] in that here the workers are shown as having no actual [but plenty of potential] power at all. The cartoon shows the workers — men, women and children — bearing the whole of society on their backs, though some are gesturing with shovels and hammers, and those on the left of the picture are a very different breed, waving the red flag and showing general defiance. Here are the class-conscious workers come to enlighten their co-workers so that they will use their potential strength. This of course was the role the I.W.W. saw for itself: through agitation, education and struggle it would light the flame of working-class militancy that would produce the revolution that would overturn capitalism. For the moment, however, the workers support all those above them: The employing class and their middle class allies ["we eat for you"], one of whom has collapsed at the table, drunk; the soldiers and the churches [of various faiths]; and kings and presidents. At the very peak of the pyramid is a money-bag: everyone serves capitalism, at least for the time being. The cartoon depicts the analysis of capitalism held by the Socialist Party of Canada, to which such leaders of the 1919 Strike as R.B. Russell and R.J. Johns, belonged:

> *Labour produces all the wealth, and to the producers it should belong. The present economic system is based upon capitalist ownership of the means of production, consequently all the products of labour belong to the capitalist also. The capitalist is therefore master; the worker a slave.*
>
> *So long as the capitalist class remains in possession of government all the powers of the State will be used to protect and defend their property rights...*
>
> *The irrepressible conflict of interests between the capitalist and the worker is rapidly culminating in a struggle for possession of the power of government — the capitalist to hold, the worker to secure it by political action. This is the class struggle.*
>
> *Therefore, we call upon all workers to organize under the banner of the Socialist Party of Canada with the object of conquering the public powers for the purpose of setting up and enforcing the economic program of the working class... [Cotton's Weekly*, 31 December, 1908]

Statements such as this, despite the references to "political" action, played a part in persuading nervous conservatives [small-c] in 1919 that the General Strike was indeed the first step in the revolution hoped for by the Socialist Party of Canada. Perhaps the cartoons also played their own small part.

Source: U.B.C. Library Special Collections.

Cartoon 12: The Tree of Evil

This is a 1912 cartoon produced by the same makers who made the preceding cartoon, and, like it, was much fa-

voured by the Industrial Workers of the World and those who saw in socialism the only lasting solution to industrial conflict. There is a lot happening in this cartoon and students can easily miss much of the detail unless it is pointed out to them. Marx is front and centre, labelled as an "educator", reading from *Capital* and pronouncing that "we class conscious workers must destroy the cause of evil." The evil in question is the "profit system", represented by the "trusts" [=combines] on the tree, yielding a crop of "diseases & crime." The real cause of the evil, however, is "ignorance", as represented by the roots of the tree [and the ignorance in question, of course, is ignorance of Marxist principles]. This is why the worker ["labor"] is cutting at the roots ["Where I cut off one it will never grow again"], while the less radical reformers are working only on the branches. The doctor is using a spray gun. The preacher holds a bible. The trust-buster wields a saw. All proclaim their impotence. The message is obvious: Reform deals only with symptoms; it will not solve the fundamental problem. It was, in part [but only in part], this kind of outlook that helped produce the hysteria of Cartoon 7, with its portrayal of a berserk wrecker. Meanwhile, through all the activity, the capitalist [note the stereotypes again: top hat, spats, clean cuffs, prominent stomach] fertilizes the tree with the limbs and heads of "factory scrap", some of which is labelled "too old", all the while remarking "From such manure grow large profits." Here is represented pictorially the I.W.W. view of the world, that was in general shape shared by the radical leaders of the Winnipeg General Srike such as R.B. Russell, though they drew different conclusions for action.

Source: U.B.C. Library Special Collections.

Cartoon 13: The last strike

This cartoon comes from the same makers as do the previous two and, like them, was used by the Industrial Workers of the World and other left wing groups. It dates from 1912 and champions the cause of industrial unionism [i.e. all the workers in any one industry, regardless of particular trades, should belong to the same union] over that of craft unionism. This was an important issue for the labour movement. In the early twentieth century craft unions were dominant. They organized skilled workers [the "aristocracy of labour"] only [carpenters, printers, boiler-makers, machinists, coopers, etc., etc.] and tended to be on the conservative [small-c] side politically. Their chief concern was to protect the position of the skilled worker, especially in the face of mechanization and de-skilling. They were intensely proud of their skills and opposed any attempt to "dilute" them by giving their work to less skilled people. R.B. Russell, one of the 1919 strike leaders, in later life described how this worked in his days at the C.P.R. Weston shops in the years before 1914:

> *These craft jealousies were tremendous. The helper, he couldn't tighten up a nut ... he couldn't do nothing. All the helping he done was — he went to the tool-room and got tools that the machinist sent him to get or he went and got the material ... for doing the job, but he wasn't allowed — like if you were working on a locomotive and you were doing the cylinders, you know, putting in the pistons and doing the cylinders. Well, there are two sides, the right and left cylinders, you see. Well, you'd be on the right hand side. You'd be tightening up and your helper could very easily tighten up the nuts on the other side. Oh no! That was a sacrilege, if you ever allowed a helper to raise a spanner, to tighten up a bolt, to do anything like that. All he was to do was to do the heavy stuff ... do the lifting — take the weight off.... You had to do the rest.* [R.B. Russell Interview, Provincial Archives of Manitoba]

Socialists like Russell wanted to break out of the tradition of craft unionism and to organize the unskilled and semi-skilled. Russell took the idea to its logical conclusion and came to champion the cause of One Big Union, which was to include all workers everywhere. After 1919, in fact, he was to become the leading figure of the Winnipeg-based O.B.U. until it merged with the newly-formed Canadian Labour Congress in 1956. People like Russell were motivated by two main concerns. One, it was increasingly obvious by the early 1900's that employers were intent on breaking the traditional power of skilled workers and were using machinery to do it. Thus, it was in the unions' best interest to organize the unskilled and semi-skilled who were being used to under-cut skilled workers. Moreover, events in the 1890's [especially the great Dock Strike in London, England, in 1889] had shown that the craft workers were wrong to believe that the unskilled were too poor, ignorant and irresponsible, to be good union material. In the second place, Russell's socialism led him to believe that the future lay with the working-class as a whole, and not just one section of it. But if the working class was to succeed, all workers had to become class conscious and to give up their particular priorities for the good of their class as a whole — which, in a nutshell, is why the One Big Union idea made sense to Russell. Moreover, so long as unions remained separate, each pursuing its on agenda, employers and governments could play them off against each other.

In this cartoon, "craft unionism" has been trampled and broken by the "capitalist" but the barrier of "industrial unionism" remains strong, shattering the capitalist's sword ["hunger"]. Note here the implicit argument that employers used the hunger resulting from poor wages, unemployment, lay-offs, etc., to coerce workers to act against their own best interests, that hunger was in fact a weapon in the

hands of the capitalists. The "capitalist" is drawn with the usual stereotyped characteristics — overweight, top-hatted, frock-coated, clean-cuffed — and is riding the donkey of "labour". The donkey, in turn, is blind-folded by "ignorance", which indirectly takes us back to the idea of Marx as educator, as portrayed in Cartoon 12. One reason why Bob Russell, for example, supported the Socialist Party of Canada was its emphasis on the need for political education [in the broadest sense]. The Party argued that one could not achieve socialism until one had made socialists, that socialism was not some administrative system that could be imposed but rather had to come from the convictions of people. Thus, Russell's own program contained a double-barrelled combination of union work and political action, all aimed at preparing the way for socialism in the long run, while pressing for immediate reforms in the short.

To return to the cartoon, note that the "capitalist" is wearing spurs labelled "patriotism". This reflects the belief, shared by people like Russell, that people in power deliberately used patriotism to blind working people to their true interests. For Russell and those like him, loyalty to class should come before loyalty to country. They took seriously Marx's statement that "the workers have no country." Indeed, in the First World War Russell earned himself considerably unpopularity in Winnipeg by arguing that the real enemy of the Canadian worker was not the German worker but the Canadian capitalist.

The "reform" plank under the donkey's feet, together with the "middle class" plank behind the animal, represent all those middle-class reformers who hoped to mediate the conflict between labour and capital. The same theme is carried through in the banner labelled "civic federation" being trailed by the "labour fakir" on the other side of the wall. The National Civic Federation was a largely middle class American organization active in the early 1900's in trying to bring together labour and capital in order to secure class cooperation. In the cartoonist's view all such efforts were obviously misguided and would in any case be ultimately crushed by capital. The same mindset was evident in Cartoon 12 in the image of the worker cutting the roots of the tree: reform will not work, in fact in the final analysis it helps capital more than labour; only revolution will suffice.

On the other side of the "industrial union" barrier a reformed "trust manager" [top-hat and all the trimmings again] tells the "capitalist" that it's all over: "Our rule is ended, dismount and go to work" — with the last word giving us an insight into what the labour left [and probably others too] regarded as "work". I remember my own father, a working man who was supportive of my getting an academic education, nonetheless having trouble seeing book-work as "real work." Not so long ago, in his final illness, on a day when I dug his garden for him, I overheard him say to my mother, "He can work, can't he!" Old attitudes die hard!

Behind the "trust manager" a host of now obsolete characters [banker, law, general, parasite], all having jettisoned their rents, stocks, profits, interest, deeds, bonds, enter the house of the "Industrial Cooperative Commonwealth." The term reminds us that the idea of the "cooperative commonwealth" had a long life in labour and socialist circles before the C.C.F. picked it up in 1933. Its meaning is important: cooperation [not competition] would provide the common well-being, both material and non-material [in this context, note the banner in the sky; "No more exploitation, wars nor strikes. The real producers own the world."] Notice also that behind the people entering the building trails the dejected figure of a "labour fakir". This was a favourite term of abuse used by more militant or radical unionists to condemn their more moderate colleagues. It was especially used against union leaders who took a strictly economic view of their role and who refused to connect with any wider ideological or political struggle. The word was sometimes spelled "faker", giving a double-meaning. A "faker" is a fraud, someone who pretends to be what he or she is not. A "fakir" is a leader who uses his or her influence to sway followers. In this case, the message is driven home by the banner the fakir is trailing, labelled "civic federation" [see the explanation above] and the revealing "love your master."

It seems that all the bankers, generals, parasites, etc., emerge from the house of the industrial cooperative commonwealth as happy, reconstructed workers. They emerge differently dressed in respectable working-class clothes, even carrying what appear to be lunch pails [a "snap box" my father would have said in our local dialect], to enter the "freedom" automobile. Perhaps a deliberate contrast is intended here with the capitalist's donkey: the old order has given place to the new, and modern technology will be used to the workers' benefit, not their ruin. The bright promise of technology, if it is properly used, is also implied by the airship in the sky.

Finally, a word about what the cartoonist did not do. At first glance, the cartoon obviously represents a very polarized view of the world. It posits an irreconcilable conflict between capital and labour, in which reform is futile and only fundamental change will work. Moreover, this fundamental change will involve the dispossession of the capitalist class and the conversion of competitive, individual ownership to cooperative, collective ownership. These are radical changes but the cartoonist has not drawn a scene of violence or of armed struggle, though one would have expected that the kind of capitalists portrayed in cartoons like these would not give up without a fight. Indeed, in real life, they, or more accurately their armies of private detectives, soldiers and police, fought bitterly, especially in parts

of the United States [in this connection I recommend the film *Matewan*, about the struggles in the West Virginia coal fields, which is available in video stores]. In this cartoon, however, it seems that the capitalists more or less accept the inevitable. Perhaps the cartoonist is telling us that if workers unite and stick together, even the most diehard capitalists will realize that resistance is futile. Perhaps there is an element of the belief that scientific socialism is indeed scientific and change will occur willy-nilly. In any event, it is worth noting that the cartoonist has avoided any suggestion of physical violence. Nonetheless, cartoons like this do serve to remind us of the spread of revolutionary ideas in the early 1900's [as did in its way the film, *Reds*, some years ago] and so provide a little of the context of the image of the unions as dangerous destroyers, as portrayed in Cartoon 7.

Source: U.B.C. Library Special Collections.

Cartoon 14: The American Bolshevist

Here is the revolutionary unionist portrayed from the other side of the ideological fence. This cartoon originated in the United States and was reprinted in the *Winnipeg Telegram* on 17 June, 1919, only a few days before the end of the General Strike. The *Telegram* was a strongly Conservative newspaper and, like most opponents of the General Strike, saw the strike leaders as people who intended to force Bolshevism on Winnipeg. Today, with the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the collapse of Soviet-style Communism, it is easy to forget the impact the Bolshevik Revolution had on the world, especially since it took place at a time of increasing working class militancy in the industrialized countries. Indeed, the Canadian historian, Greg Kealey, has recently argued that the policies of the Borden government can be explained better as a response to this militancy than as responses to the demands of the First World War. [G.S. Kealey, "State Repression and the Left in Canada, 1914-20: The Impact of the First World War," in *Canadian Historical Review*, LXXIII [3], September, 1992, pp. 281-314] The militant labour conference held in Calgary in March, 1919, sent a congratulatory message to Lenin and the Soviet leadership. At the Versailles Peace Conference the leaders of the major powers spent a fair amount of their time discussing what to do about the threat of Bolshevism, and created a cordon sanitaire of new states [Poland, Czechoslavakia, Yugoslavia, for example] in central Europe in an effort to contain it. There were sporadic, if short-lived, Communist revolutions in Hungary and Bavaria. There were secret police reports that Bolsheviks were at work stirring up trouble in the armed forces, so that the demobilization riots staged by soldiers impatient to get home at the end of the war took on a new appearance. All in all, there was a certain amount of nervousness about the spread of Bolshevism and its appeal to militant workers. There were secret police reports that Bolsheviks were at work stirring up trouble in the armed forces, so that the demobilization riots staged by soldiers impatient to get home at the end of the war took on a new appearance. All in all, there was a certain amount of nervousness about the spread of Bolshevism and its appeal to militant workers. When the Winnipeg elite spoke of the strike leaders as Bolsheviks, they were obviously wrong, but in the context of their times one can see why they believed it, especially given the sometimes fiery statements of the strikers themselves.

Here, the Bolshevist seeks to trade democracy to the anarchist in return for the straw of Soviet government. The portrayal of the anarchist contains most of the conventional stereotypes — beard, bomb, firebrand and generally desperate appearance. It is more difficult to know what to make of the rather weedy Bolshevist. One might have expected a raging monster, but we get a harmless looking character instead. A misguided idealist? A feeble intellectual? A foolish citizen?

Source: *Winnipeg Telegram*, 17 June, 1919.

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FREE ISSUE

Cartoon 1

Sir Wilfrid: "Why should I lower it
when I am getting such results as this?"

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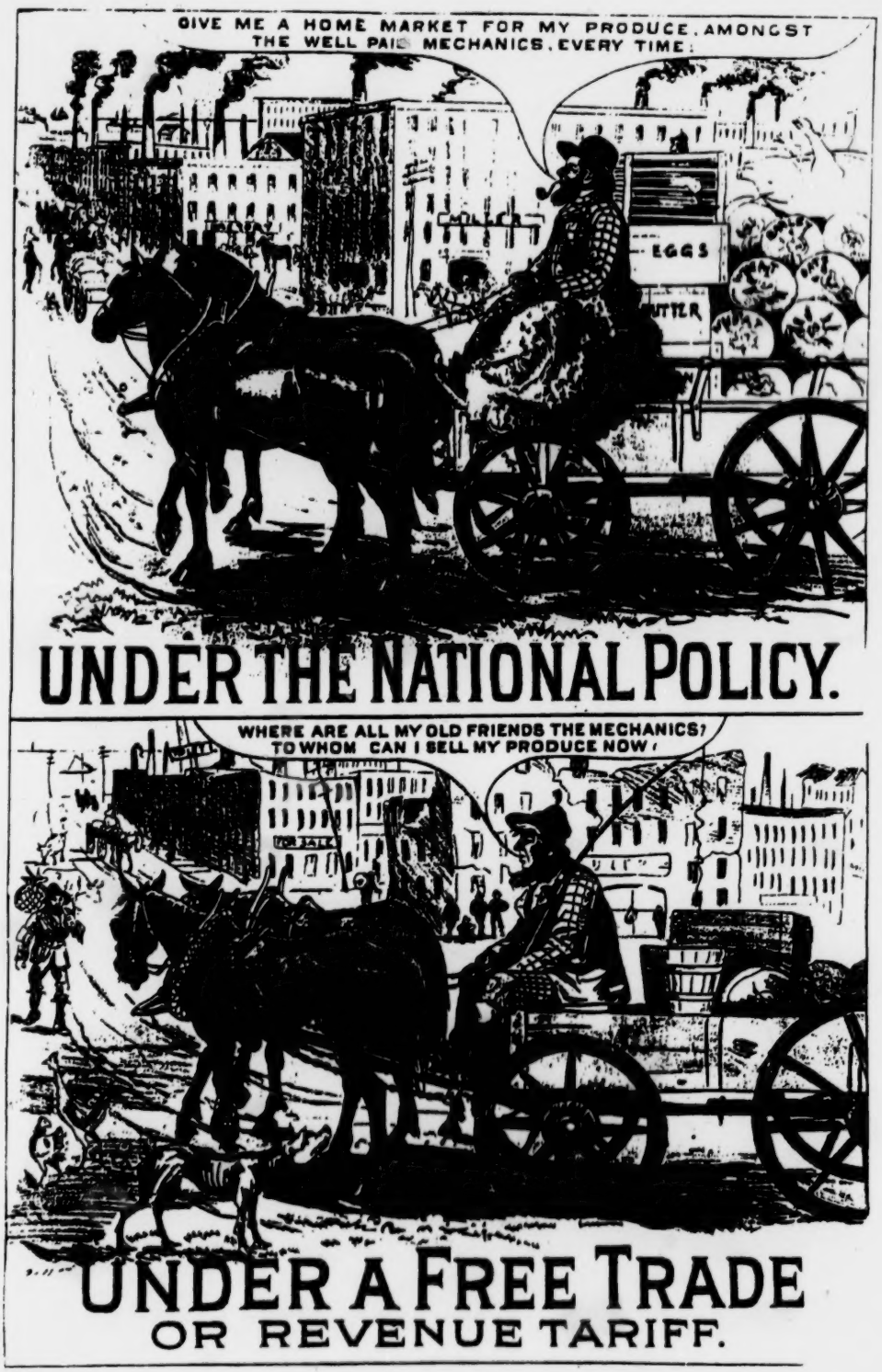
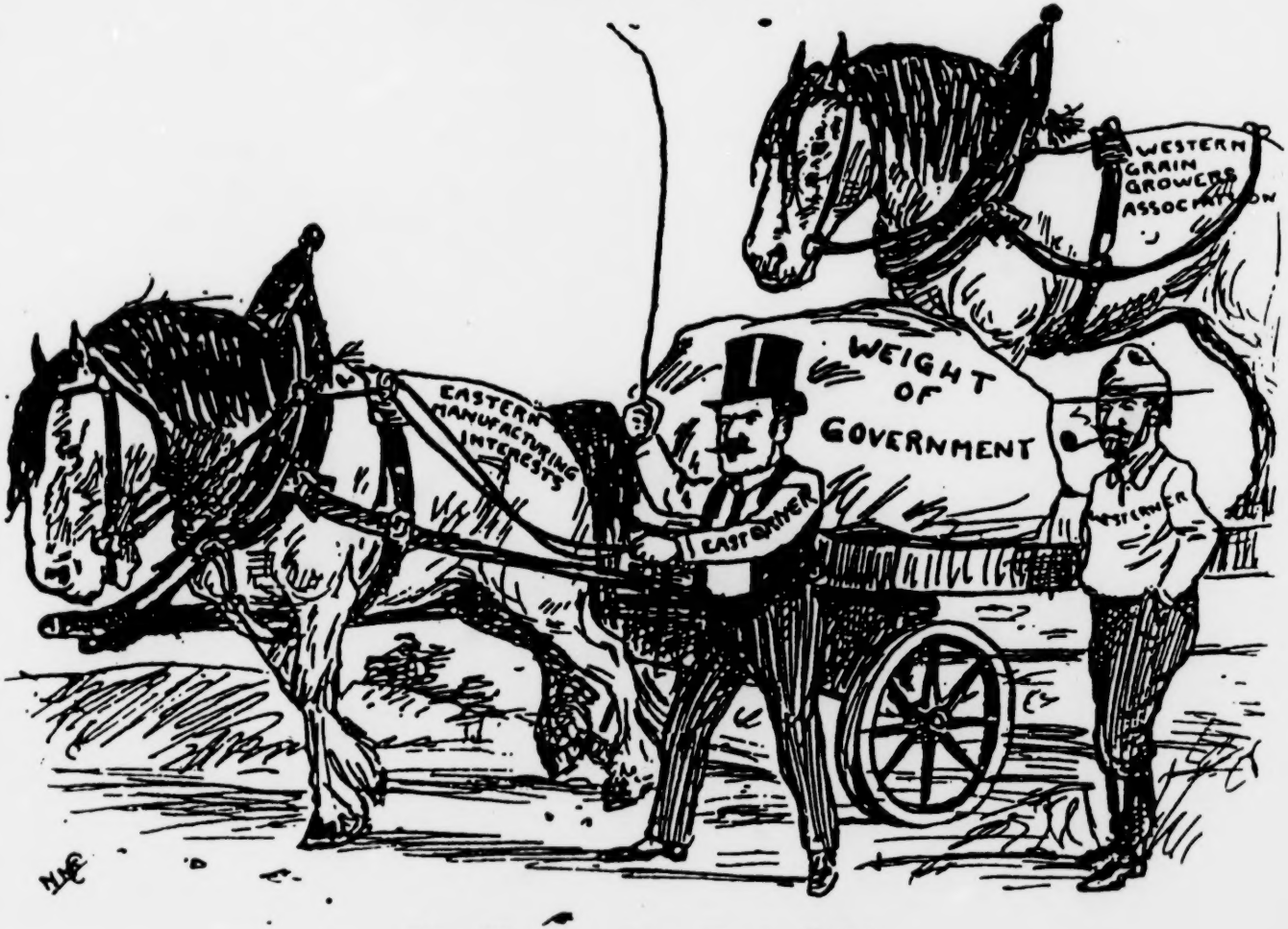
Cartoon 2


GIVE ME A HOME MARKET FOR MY PRODUCE, AMONGST THE WELL PAID MECHANICS, EVERY TIME.
EGGS
UNDER THE NATIONAL POLICY.
WHERE ARE ALL MY OLD FRIENDS THE MECHANICS? TO WHOM CAN I SELL MY PRODUCE NOW?
FOR SALE
UNDER A FREE TRADE
OR REVENUE TARIFF.

Cartoon 3

Vol. the Nineteenth, No. 4.
GRIP.
Saturday, 10th June, 1882.
PROMISES
GOVERNMENT
HIGH WAGES
CHEAP LIVING
WAIT A LITTLE LONGER
WORKING CLASS
ARISTOCRATIC LANDLORDISM
COAL TAX
STARVATION PASTURE
POTATOES NOT A PENNY
A GLORIOUS PROSPECT!
THE AULD WOMAN.—TRULY, AS YOU SAY, SIR, THE PASTURE IS VERA POOR, BUT THE COW HAS A GRAND VIEW!!

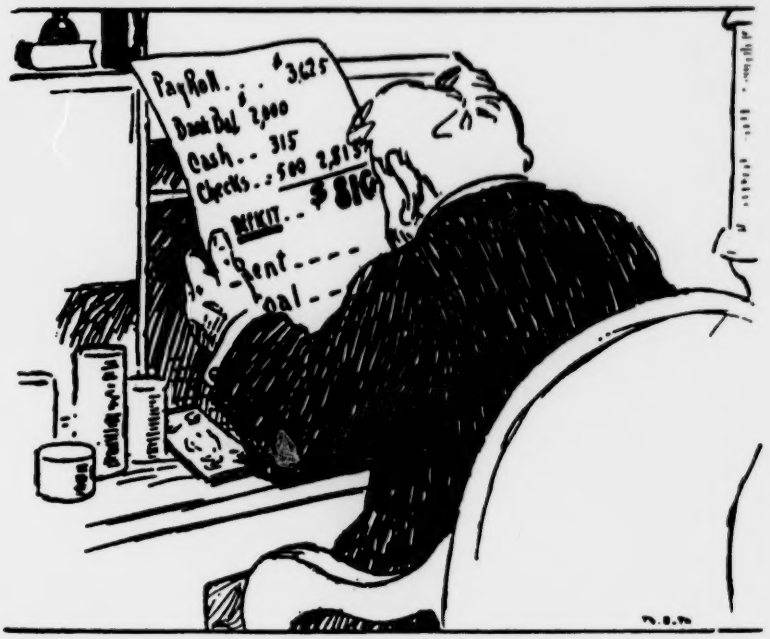
Who Carries the Load?



The Western Free Trade Spirit

Cartoon 5

Workman: "There's the old man counting up his money as usual."



A closer inspection shows that that is just what "the old man" is doing.

Cartoon 6

Some Aspects of the Eight Hour Day Movement

THE FISHERMAN "HI, DROP THAT NET. TIME'S UP. THIS IS AN EIGHT HOUR BOAT."
THE HIRED MAN "CAN'T HELP IT IF IT IS GOIN TO RAIN. IT'S FIVE MINUTES OVER MY TIME AND IM GOIN' TO QUIT."
THE DOCTOR "I'LL COME BACK AND FINISH YOU TOMORROW. THE UNION'LL BE AFTER ME IF I DON'T STOP WHEN THE WHISTLE BLOWS."

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Cartoon 7

The Trade Unionist Makes War Against the Community.

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Cartoon 8

THE GOVERNMENT "INVESTIGATING" MONOPOLY

Cartoon 9

MISS CANADA, BARMAID.

WHEN WILL THE COUNTRY BE "RIPE" TO GET OUT OF THIS PARTNERSHIP?

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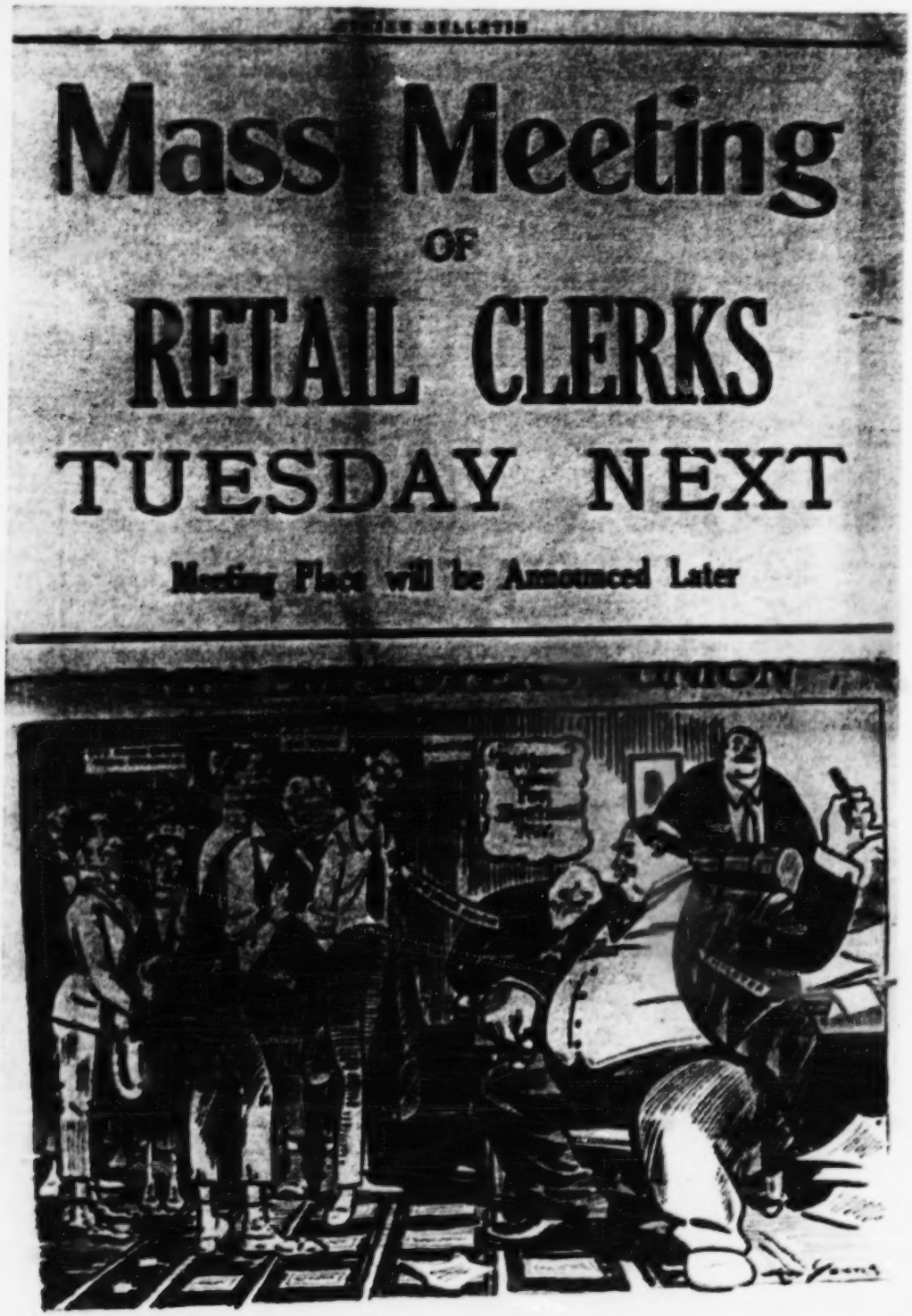
Cartoon 10



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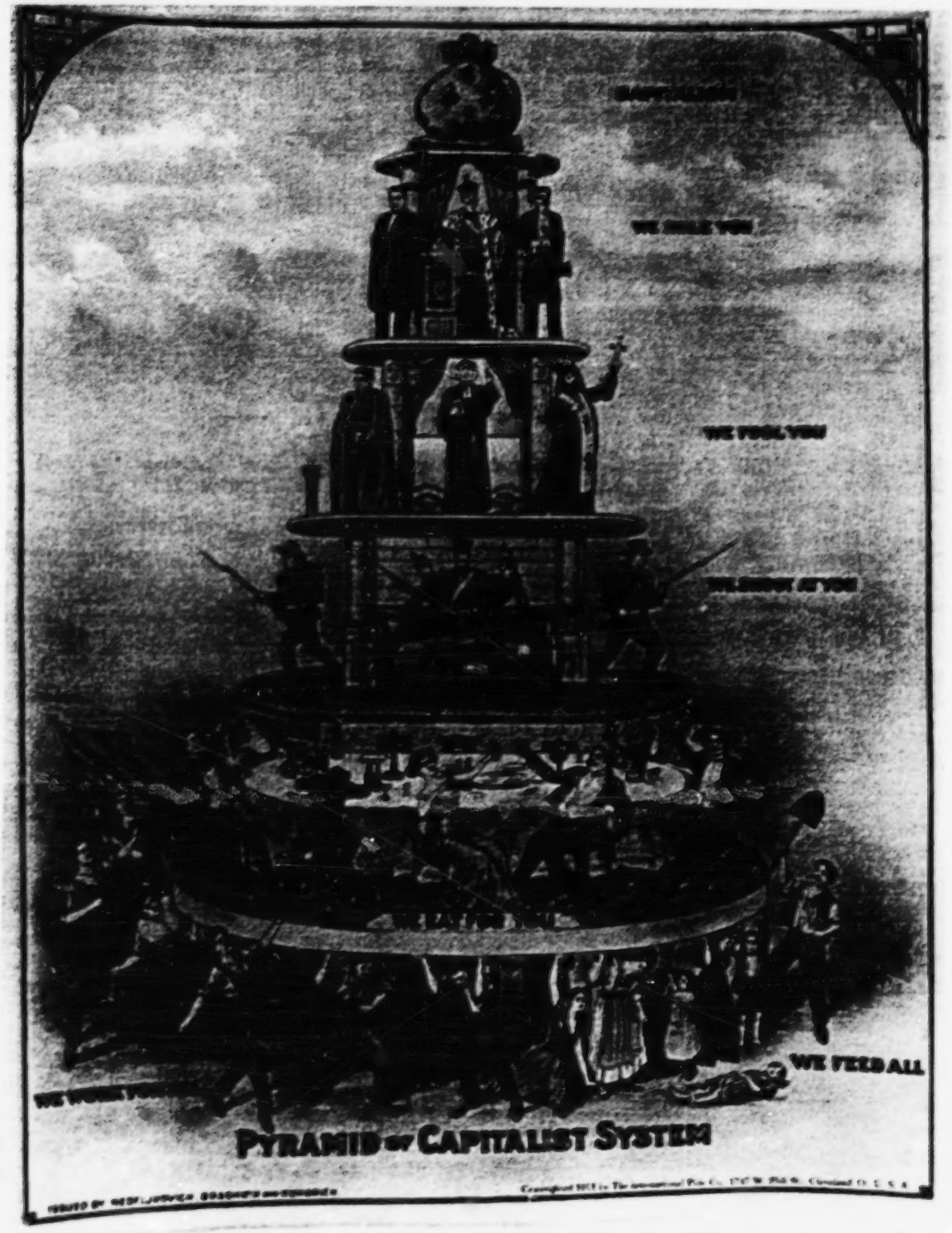
Cartoon 11



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Cartoon 12

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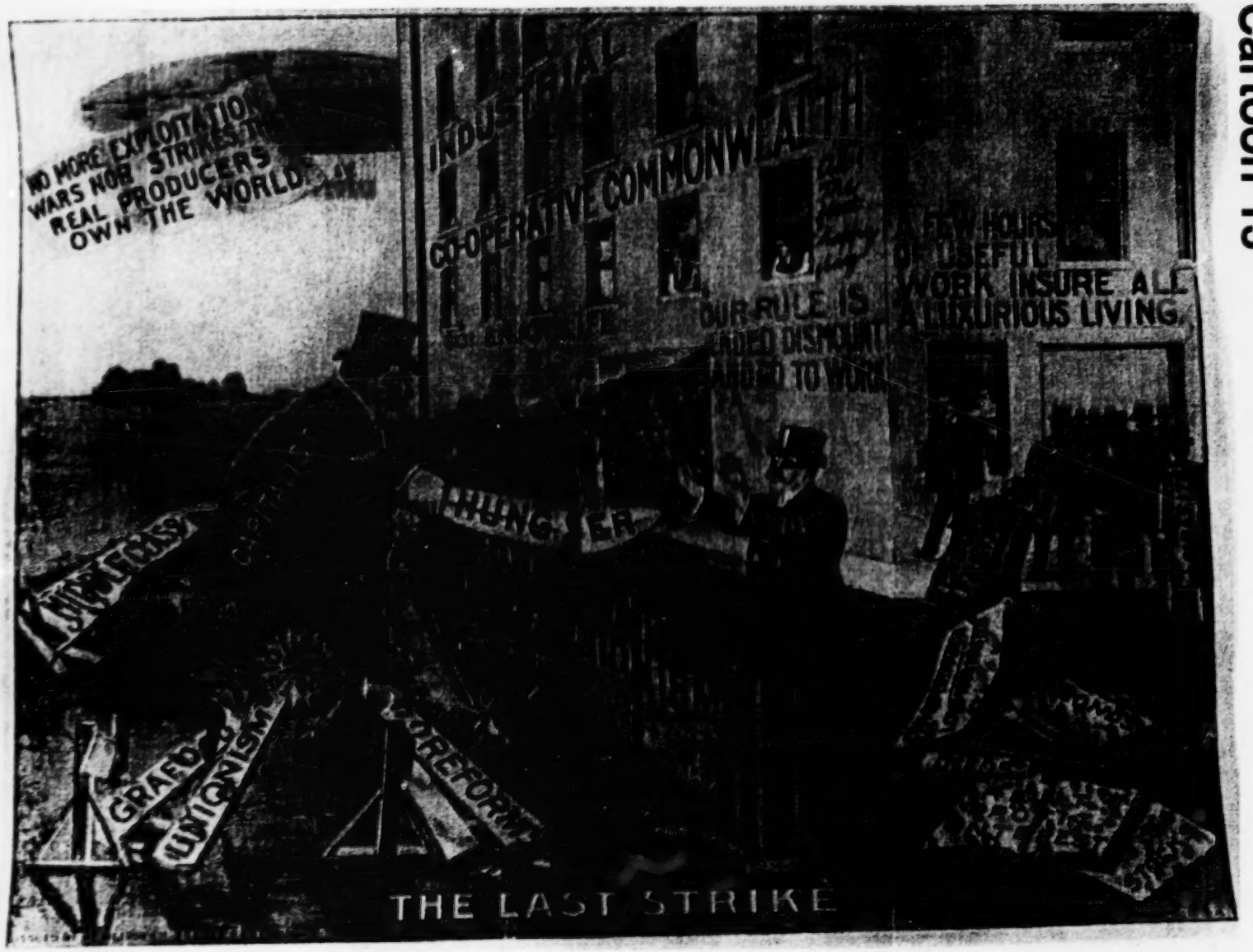

Cartoon 13

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Cartoon 14

I'LL TRADE YOU THIS BED FOR THAT PILE OF STRAW—IT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME
BUT IT ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME!
THE REST OF US
ANARCHY
DEMOCRAC
SOVIET GOVERNMENT
(SEE-SAW, MARGERY DAW SOLD HER BED TO LIE UPON STRAW

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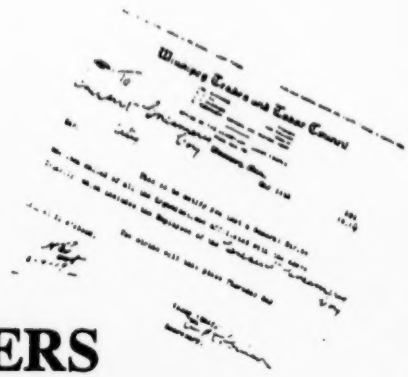

CALL FOR PAPERS

7th ANNUAL MANITOBA HISTORY CONFERENCE

MAY 5-6, 1994

Submission Deadline: April 8, 1994

This year's conference marks the 75th anniversary of the Winnipeg General Strike. Papers with a focus on labour history are especially encouraged, although papers on any aspect of Manitoba History are welcomed so long as they have not been published previously. Papers must be typed and should not exceed twelve (12) pages, doublespaced, excluding footnotes. In conjunction with this year's conference will be the first Zuken Memorial Lecture, to be presented by Professor Stanley Aronowitz, City University of New York. The Paul H.T. Thorlakson prize of $100 will once again be awarded for the best student paper.

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Women and the Industrial Revolution

Ken Osborne

Women were involved in Canada's Industrial Revolution, virtually from its very beginnings, particularly, though not exclusively, in the textile and boot and shoe industries. Indeed, from the 1880's on Quebec women cotton workers often led the way in resisting management attempts to bring the workplace under greater control. To take only one example, Jacques Ferland tells the story of an 1880 strike by non-unionized women at the Hochelaga cotton mill in Montreal in 1880. Here the manager had greatly increased production and profits — so much so that he was given a $10,000 bonus, no small sum in those days, while the workers were given a free picnic. The manager saw further opportunities in the enactment of John A. Macdonald's National Policy. Predicting that many more mills would be built in Canada now that there was a protective tariff, he determined on a further campaign of speed-ups and tighter workplace controls.In particular, the workers were required to work more hours, over and above their regular twelve-hour days [and eight hours on Saturdays] but with minimal extra pay. In short, the company would increase its profits, but only by further exploiting its workers. In addition, changes were made in the manufacturing process, so that workers would be required to handle more material and machinery, but without being given any more time. In response, the workers, mostly women, struck, sought legal advice, and demanded a ten-hour day and a 15% wage raise. They also agreed not to return to work until these demands were met, and to levy a ten dollar fine on any worker who broke their agreement. The manager called on the services of the mayor and the local priest, but the women stood firm. In the end the strike was broken, but such examples serve to remind us that the workplace, and workplace action, were not exclusively male affairs, though they were often male-dominated. [Ferland, 1989]

At the same time, as Bettina Bradbury reminds us, such examples "should not lead us to ignore the fact that most women workers in the past were not unionized, that those showing militancy and determination stand out for their uniqueness rather than their representativeness, and that to organize involved overcoming major ideological and structural problems." [Bradbury, 1987: 30] These structural problems often involved the work was organized, with women often being separated from men and restricted to particular types of work in particular areas of the workplace so that the chances to form lines of solidarity across gender lines were unduly limited. In addition, in some trades, and especially in the case of needleworkers, entrepreneurs deliberately fostered domestic work as a cheaper and less troublesome alternative to the factory. The result for the women engaged in the needlework industry was predictable: they worked at piece rates which were far below the subsistence level; they necessarily competed against each other; they became the archetype of "sweated labour"; they had no recourse against employers' powers until legislation was slowly and not all that effectively introduced during the twentieth century. [McIntosh, 1993]

Industrialization led to some jobs becoming virtually exclusively the preserve of women, as, for example in the case of clerical office work, which expanded rapidly in the early 1900's as management became increasingly bureaucratized. [Lowe, 1982] To take another example, the first telephone operators were male, but by the 1890's they were almost all women. Boys were found to be undisciplined and disobedient, and often rude to customers. Women, on the other hand, were believed to be more courteous and respectful. In the words of an 1898 article:

> In the first place, the clear feminine quality of voice suits the delicate instrument. Then girls are usually more alert than boys, and always more patient. Women are more sensitive and more amenable to discipline, far gentler and more forbearing than men... Boys and men are less patient. They have always an element of fight in them. When spoken to roughly they are not going to give the soft answer. Not they. And every man is a crank when he gets on a phone. The personal equation stands for naught. He is looking into the blank wooden receiver and it doesn't inspire him with respectful politeness. [*cit.* in Martin: 1988: 156]

The gender stereotypes that pervade this passage need no comment, but they were typical of the attitudes that women found in the workplace, not only from management but also from their male co-workers. The prevalent assumption was that women should be wives and mothers, and that, therefore, any outside employment was temporary. There were exceptions as in the case of the knitting mills in Paris, Ontario, recently examined by Joy Parr [Parr, 1990], but the dominant belief was that women's place was in the home. This belief also justified paying women lower wages than men, barring them from supervisory positions, and for the most part, keeping them in certain confined job categories. Indeed, management gender assumptions often overrode economic imperatives, as Margaret McCallum has shown in her analysis of workers and work in the Ganong candy industry in New Brunswick. Even when they needed workers in particular trades, Ganong would not cross gender lines. Rather than using women to do men's work, or vice versa, the firm turned to machinery or outside recruitment. [McCallum, 1989] Moreover, where women were accepted as workers, management could and did draw upon paternalistic stereotypes in their concern to control the workplace. As Joan Sangster has described the running of a Peterborough plant which employed large numbers of women workers: "Paternalism was sustained by its assimilation and reproduction of a gender ideology which reinforced an image of female transience and marriageability, male independence and camaraderie, and female obedience and male authority." [Sangster, 1993: 198]

Gender stereotypes were also common among male workers and unionists, prompting one B.C. woman activist to observe: "The history of women in industry ... is the story of struggle not only against the capitalist class who have exploited them mercilessly, but also against the men of their own class who said because they were women they must not expect to be looked upon as co-workers or receive the same pay when doing the same kind or quantity of work." [*cit.* in Kealey, 1984: 98] There were exceptions, however. For example, the Knights of Labour in the late nineteenth century insisted that women workers should be organized and regarded male and female workers as equal. [Kealey & Palmer, 1987: 316-326] And there were occasions when class proved stronger than gender and male unionists supported women workers. At the same time, male unionists made much of the concept of "manliness." It was manly to stand by one's co-workers, to resist unfair management demands, to take a pride in one's skill, to support one's family, and so on, and though women workers often demonstrated all of these qualities, many unionists had a residual fear that somehow women could not be "manly" — and perhaps should not be, since their role was to nurture and support as wives and mothers, sisters and daughters. More than sexism was involved here, however. As Bettina Bradbury has pointed out, the union demand for a "family wage" was not a disguised way of confining women to the home. In her words, "Skilled workers believed married women should work at home as home makers, not simply in order to dominate them, which they could, but also because within the context of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century capitalism, such work was required to transform wages into sustenance and shelter.... This sexual division of labour within the family provided the basis for the material reproduction of the working class." [Bradbury, 1987: 36]

In fact, as feminists have rightly reminded us, women's unpaid work in the home was one of the necessary foundations of what was happening to paid work outside the home. It is a truism that a labour force must maintain and reproduce itself, and women's work in the home was crucial to this process. As Veronica Strong-Boag puts it:

> Scholars are unanimous in rejecting the view that work within the home is either minimal or in decline and in insisting that domestic labour of all kinds lies at the core of human relationships and is crucial to the functioning of the political economy of societies at every stage of development. Men in their role as fathers, husbands, brothers, and sons are identified as deriving direct and substantial benefits from women's paid and unpaid work in the home. The allocation of domestic responsibilities overwhelmingly to women frees men to explore a wider range of social, economic, and political avenues. These other activities are then rewarded with benefits for the most part superior to those offered for work in the home. The fact that women are assigned pre-eminently to the domestic sphere also encourages employers to pay them lower wages and offer them fewer opportunities. Their work in the market place has been conveniently viewed as something of an aberration, expandable and contractable at the whim of state, business, and family necessity. [Strong-Boag, 1986: 125]

When women were brought into the industrial workplace in a major way during the First World War, many stereotypes were proved to be just that — false and unfair representations of reality — though they survived nonetheless. Women's ability to do what was considered to be man's work, for example in engineering and machine shops, was the subject of considerable comment, as in this example from a report of the Imperial Munitions Board:

> There are many operations in the Machine Shop which can be safely assigned to women... The tool room represents every advantage for female labour, in spite of the fact that engineering history tells us that it is the department for highly trained mechanics,

but it had been clearly demonstrated that women under the guidance of trained toolmakers, are efficient and useful. The grinding of milling caps, cutters, general cutting tools and other repetition work is particularly suited for them. The making of jigs and dies is, and probably always will be, a highly skilled mechanic's task, but we look forward to the time when many more women will be admitted to this branch of engineering work. Especially have women astonished engineers in their aptitude for the handling of milling machines. [*cit.* in Acton, Goldsmith & Shephard, 1974: 275]

There is something of a transitional flavour in this passage, maintaining some stereotypes [for example, in the alleged suitability of women for repetitious work], but also acknowledging the existence of new possibilities. In the event, of course, it did not make much difference, for with the end of the War women were pressured to hand over their jobs to men and return to the home, as in this not-so subtle "appeal";

To Women workers —
Are you holding a job you do not need?
Perhaps you have a husband at home well able to support you and a comfortable home?
You took a job during the war to help meet the shortage of labour.
You have "made good" and you want to go on working.
But the war is over and conditions have changed.
There is no longer a shortage of labour. On the contrary
Ontario is faced by a serious situation due to the number of men unemployed.
This number is being increased daily by returning soldiers.
They must have work. The pains and dangers they have endured in our defence give the right to expect it.
Do you feel justified in holding a job which could be filled by a man who has not only himself to support, but a wife and family as well?
Think it over.

[*cit.* in Acton, Goldsmith & Shephard, 1974:288]

As women's historians and feminist scholars have shown us, these words are simply the tip of a massive iceberg of values and assumptions bearing on the whole question of gender identity and gender relationships. We can understand the history of work and the workplace only when we take gender into account. Economics and technology, class and unionism, tell an important part of the story, but only a part, for gender was also an important factor in shaping the workplace. For teaching purposes, this means that, at the very least, we should teach our students to ask these questions: what counts as work? Who decides? Who gets to do what jobs? Why? What were the roles of women and men and how did they get to be the way they were? How did a socially constructed gender-based division of labour come to be taken as reflecting an alleged biological reality? As I have tried to demonstrate, albeit far too briefly, working-class and women's historians are increasingly providing us with the material that makes it possible to explore such questions. And, as the following newspaper article suggests, the questions are still very much with us.

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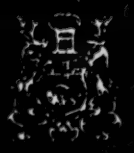

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An interview with Fred Tipping

Bob Davis

The day before I was to leave Winnipeg, I was chatting with Bob Gordon, the General Secretary in 1973 of The Manitoba Teachers' Society. When I mentioned to him that I had discovered that no teachers were on strike in 1919, he said, "No, that's not true. There was one, Fred Tipping, and he's still alive in his late eighties and as clear as a bell."

I recognized Fred's name as a strike activist and I called him up. He was inundated in those days by interviewers, but fortunately he loved talking about the old days:

Ten years or so before the Winnipeg Strike of 1919, I was a theologian for the Baptist Church. I was really strong on the social gospel and was inadvertently splitting a big congregation because the young people were in my Bible class — which was really a class in economics! — and the older leaders of the church didn't like what I was teaching their kids. So I had to get out.

Teaching woodwork

Now by trade, I am a woodcarver, or I was, and this is where I went after leaving the church. I didn't remain in the shops long, but as soon as I got in the shops I did what I thought I should do, I joined the Carpenters' Union. By a little lobbying, I got in, though I wasn't a carpenter. I quickly became president and, in fact, in two years I was president of the Winnipeg District Labour Council.

But because I was a woodcarver, I had been approached some time before to enter school to teach woodwork. So I went into education by the back door.

When I switched from woodwork and went into academic work in the schools, I could no longer carry a card for the Carpenters' Union because I wasn't using the tools of a carpenter. But about that time we were stirring ourselves to get going a protective organization for teachers. Of course I threw myself into that as soon as I was out of the Carpenters. My objective was to make it a trade union, and there I bumped into trouble because, of course, the middle class teachers, they didn't want their organization to be like a trade union.

Just to give you a little illustration, I walked down the street one day with one of the women teachers of the school and she said, "Well I think it would be a good thing to have an organization. But I don't think it should be like the trade unions." She happened to be quite a religious person which I knew. Then I remarked to her: "Isn't it strange how many people pretend to worship a dead carpenter and despise a live mechanic?"

The ratio of women to men teachers in those days was about six to one. At that time men got much more salary as teachers. So I threw myself immediately in with the women in the fight for equal pay for equal work. Many men teachers were bitter on this question because they got the silly idea that if we gave equal pay for equal work, it would mean a lowering of the level of all salaries. There were only about five cities in the United States at that time where such equality existed, and in every one of them salaries were high above the average for both men and women.

The only teacher on strike

Then came the Winnipeg General Strike. You see, I was still in the Carpenters' Union when the strike broke. I was teaching in the shop. My union was involved because the Carpenters' Union was really one of the reasons for the beginning of the strike. They went out on strike before the larger strike began. That put me in a rather awkward position. I was a member of the union, yet I was teaching in a school shop. The teachers had stayed clear of the strike altogether. What was I going to do? I was married, so what was I going to do?

So I went down and saw the Superintendent of schools, Daniel McIntyre. I told him my position. "Well," he said, "I can give you no guarantee. It's up to you." So I said, "Alright, I won't be in school tomorrow," and I quit. "Well we'll have to leave this in the lap of the gods and see what happens," he said.

And I stayed out till the strike was over. I'll tell you later what happened about my salary.

So then I was the only teacher in Winnipeg who went on strike and, as you know, I was quite active on the strike committee. One of my roles was talking to Prime Minister

(sic) Meighen when the government was considering deporting all the strike leaders. The strike committee thought they should have a trial by jury. Now, I don't want to imply that what I said to Meighen had any effect because the government had already decided that they couldn't proceed under the Immigration Act because George Armstrong was a key leader and was about as dark red as any of them. He was a native-born Canadian and not only that, he happened to be a true-blue United Empire loyalist. So where the hell could they deport him to? Once they ran up against this snag, they had to do something else, and they decided by the time I got to Ottawa that it would be a trial by jury. So that's that part of the story.

Strike pay from the board

Now what happened to me personally is very curious. When I retired and they presented me with a gift from the school board, I spoke on behalf of the retirees of that year because I happened to have the longest record of service for the board. I was an educator in Winnipeg for over forty years. I told them: "I've never inquired as to how it happened."

A peculiar thing had happened just previously. My wife was having a baby in the hospital, and I was teaching. They sent word from the hospital to come at once, that she was dangerously ill. I left school and I got my car and I went to the hospital. She fortunately got out of it well. But they got a substitute for the afternoon when I was away and paid him for a half day's service. They docked me a full day's pay.

Yet I got full pay for five weeks of time off during the strike!

How did it happen? My guess is this. Dr. McIntyre, the superintendent, was personally in full sympathy with the Winnipeg strike. I only know that through conversations. But he was in a position where his hands were tied. He became my friend and in fact several times he stood between me and the school board on difficulties I got into because of statements I made speaking. You can understand. The red in those days would occasionally say things that the public didn't like. I did get into several bits of struggle, there's no doubt about it. And if it hadn't been for him, frankly, I would have been canned several times.

Anyway I can only assume that McIntyre never listed me as being off and I got my full pay!

By permission of the strike committee

You ask me about the effect of the strike on the schools. Very little effect. Negligible.

Of course many things it did disrupt. and speaking about disruption, let me tell you something about Prime Minister *(sic)* Meighen. I liked Meighen. That may sound strange. I've had to do with politicians before and they were smoothies, but Meighen wasn't. Meighen was direct, straight, honest, and the opinions he had were honest opinions. He had been fed a lot of nonsense by the other side, management's Committee of 1000, and these people sincerely held views that were ridiculous. For instance, Meighen really believed that because we issued permits - and they were publicly displayed - which said "By Permission of the Strike Committee", that for this reason we had set up a soviet system in the City of Winnipeg. Well, hells bells! There were hospitals, and there were schools, and kids had to get their milk. You couldn't absolutely shut tight every door of food supplies. So what were we going to do? We had all these groups willing to go on strike, so we had to decide what were necessities and what weren't. So we issued permission signs. It looked like a soviet system. It looked like we had taken over. If someone died suddenly in Winnipeg and wanted to send a telegram, the telegram workers were out. Lord alive, you couldn't say you can't get communications to the next of kin.

Then of course Meighen had the idea that the Strike Committee was controlled by immigrants. I was active in the Strike Committee and I didn't know one blessed non-Anglo-Saxon who had any influence on any matter concerning the direction of the strike. Not one. And I said to Meighen, "Well, name one. I don't know one. And I am honest in telling you, I couldn't name a single individual who had any influence on that strike committee. Not that they shouldn't have, but they didn't."

Meighen was shocked. He had been fed that kind of thing by the Committee of 1000 and that was the idea he had in his head.

The Brandon Strike

You ask me about the Brandon Strike of 1925 *(it was actually 1922—K.O.)* when every single teacher went on strike when the board wanted a blanket 25% pay cut. I'll tell you a story about that. I had been very active since the Winnipeg strike five years before, and since then, many returned soldiers had joined our staff. Then along comes this Brandon strike. And I said to a friend of mine who was a returned soldier, "I am going to keep my mouth shut this time." He said, "Well I might see you do it, but I doubt it."

So the question was put to me as to what we were going to do for the Brandon teachers. This was a Teachers' Society meeting for the City of Winnipeg. One principal in the organization was fearful that if we did anything public, we would be considered as trade unionists. It would kill the profession, he said. "We are a profession, not a trade. We are a profession." And so on and so on.

And I couldn't take it, I couldn't. Jim Small, a fellow sitting next to me - he was a veteran who went overseas from

Winnipeg and got badly wounded - he got into the act which I'll tell you about shortly. Anyway I got up and I said, "Mr. Chairman, we have met here tonight for one purpose. What are we going to do as teachers for our fellow teachers who found it necessary to go on strike? That is the question that's facing us tonight. And you have given us a speech, and as far as I understand it, the bulk of it is this: whatever we do, we must be careful, because if we are not careful, people will think badly of us. As for the Brandon teachers, either we are sympathetic to their case and feel that they have been forced to do what they had to do, or we don't. And if we feel the former, then we've got to help them. And I don't mean by putting a few pennies in a pot. We have got to come out totally and strongly. We have to say that the Brandon teachers are right, and we are going to support them because they are right. In other words, you have outlined a cowardly path and I, for my part, am not willing to follow it. I am a trade unionist, I am proud of it, and I'm going to act as a trade unionist.

When I said it was a cowardly approach, that got them really scared because returned soldiers are not cowards. So this same principal got up and he shouted, "I would like to remind friends that if I had been a coward I would - like some we know - have refused to fight for my king and country." He was referring to the fact that I personally was a pacifist through the war and stood by it. One of the leaders of the movement.

But my friend Jim Small sitting next to me, who had been in the heavy artillery and an officer, got up - he wasn't "small" at all but a big tough individual - and said, "Yes, you were not a coward. You fought for your king and country 22 miles behind the firing line." That, of course, really opened things up.

Anyway the Winnipeg teachers eventually passed a motion giving "moral" support and so forth. To come to the present, since we're speaking of teachers' strikes — right now in 1973, the NDP government of Manitoba is willing to give teachers the right to strike, but the teachers don't want it. It's that old middle-class prejudice among teachers. Silly fools. I told them when they gave it up: "Of course if you don't want to have any power, why alright, give it up." It was one of those bad tradeoffs. It's that old thing again about "professional" ethics.

Teachers now have more money and more security. I lived over in a middle-class district before my wife died and a neighbour, a university professor, invited me to a party with a group of his university professor friends. I went in, I knew his wife quite well, and they were singing "The Red Flag"! And I said, "What in the name of hell, where have I been all this time?" They were having a few drinks to cheer them up and singing "The Red Flag" in this posh district on New Year's Eve.

A while back, I was speaking in Regina and I was supposed to be touching on the past and the connection between religion and the rise of the leftist movement in the west. And I noticed that we New Democratic Party people had a dinner and a dance scheduled for Selkirk at $25 a plate.

We've come a long way. Wouldn't it be rather funny if at that banquet they announced: "Before we begin, let us sing "The Internationale". "Arise, ye prisoners of starvation"! Freedom and starvation at $25 a plate!

Fred Tipping was a long-time labour activist in Winnipeg and perhaps the only teacher who struck in 1919. In 1973 he was interviewed by Bob Davis. The interview is reprinted, with permission, from Bob's book, ***What Our High Schools Could Be.***

MSSTA

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, 19 May, 1994
7:30 p.m.
Assiniboine Golf Course
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The Working Man

Let him speak — though his hand be rough
And his language be uncouth;
He's kept in silence long enough,
And we need the rugged truth.

Let him speak, as he stops to wipe,
The sweat from off his brow;
He has much to say, the time is ripe,
And the world will hear him now.

He has not learned your polished speech,
Nor the logic of your schools,
Nor does he hide what he would teach,
With the rhetoric of fools.

His sentences are short and sharp,
And are truths to freemen dear;
The fool may sneer, the rich may carp,
It is now their time to hear.

He has fought the battles — worked the mines —
The rich have had their say,
Have made the laws and built the shrines,
And he has had to pay.

Let him speak; he has earned the right;
Let despots now be still;
Let freemen rise in freemen's might
To do the people's will.

Ontario Workman, 23 May 1872, p. 2

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